

THE EVOLUTION OF THE SPANISH 'COMEDIA'
FROM THE CLOSE OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY
TO THE PRESENT DAY
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE PERIOD
1835-1898.

Thesis

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National Comedia.

1700

Cándamo

Zamora

National theatre persists
despite foreign influence.

Cañizares

(La) Huerta

(La) Cruz

Castillo

Comella

Romantic Drama

National theatre revives,
joining forces with
foreign Romantic elements.

La Rosa

Urra

Rivas

Gutiérrez

Hartzenbusch

Zorrilla

Moratinian Comedy

Moratin (p.)

Iriarte

Moratin (h.)

La Rosa (early works)

Herreros

Gorostiza

La Vega

Rubí

French Classical
Influence.

Foreign Romantic
Influence.

1850

Transition Drama.

Tamayo

Ayala

Eguílaz

[Echegaray]

1898

Contemporary Theatre.

Galdós

Benavente

Los Quintero

Sierra

Rivas

Marquina

Villavespa

Influence of Realism.

Influence of
European theatre.

1936.

- i) Dates are approximate and periods tend to overlap.
- ii) Certain dramatists defy classification according to the school of the period, for example Echegaray, a Neo-Romantic.
- iii) Some dramatists appear in one line of development and yet show traces of the other e.g. La Huerta, Moratin (h.), Herreros.

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(1) The Elizabethan theatre was an exception to this.

(2) La Comedia Española del XVIII. Siglo. A. Morel-Fatio.
(Paris 1923) pp. 17-18.

INTRODUCTION.

In Spain the term 'comedia' corresponded to 'play' in our own English drama and 'Schauspiel' in the German theatre. The 'Siglo de Oro' permitted a fusion of genres, and the 'comedia' designated a fusion of tragic and comic elements, which the majority of other⁽¹⁾ theatres have kept separate. A Spanish piece therefore might be emotional and tragic in parts and yet remain a 'comedia'. In one of his works Morel-Fatio has given the following definition of the Spanish 'Comedia':⁽²⁾ "C'est un terme "très large qui embrasse tous les genres de drame, que les "effets en soient comiques ou tragiques, à l'exclusion "d'une part, d'un certain drame religieux ou liturgique "que les Espagnols nomment auto, et d'autre part, des "genres inférieurs, de la farce, de l'intermède, du vaudeville, des pièces de circonstance, des féeries mythologiques." Lope de Vega, who perfected the 'Siglo de Oro

(1) The Elizabethan theatre was an exception to this.

(2) La Comedia Espagnole du XVIIe. Siècle. A. Morel-Fatio. (Paris 1923) pp.17-18.

comedia', had a definite theory about the fusion of genres. He stated that this type of dramatic production was the mirror of life, and, as comedy and tragedy were inseparable in the lives of men, so they must appear side by side in the Spanish 'comedia', which was the reflection of reality. He recommended to playwrights "Lo trágico y lo cómico mezclado", ⁽¹⁾ and, developing this idea, he gave them further advice:

"Harán grave una parte, otra ridícula;
 "Que aquesta variedad deleita mucho.
 "Buen ejemplo nos da naturaleza,
 "Que por tal variedad tiene belleza." ⁽²⁾

English Elizabethan drama exemplified this theory also; Shakespeare delighted in mingling the tragic with the comic element.

The works of the national Spanish theatre dealt with neither philosophy nor abstract theories but primarily with human beings. The never-ending passion and interest of the Spanish audience was in the individual, struggling, hating, loving, suffering, dying - in short, the complete man. He was often represented as a little better or worse

(1) Arte Nuevo de Hacer Comedias en este tiempo. Lope de Vega Carpio. 1 174.

(2) Do. Do. 11. 177-180.

than he really was, and the interpretation of his character became highly conventionalised in most Spanish Dramatic works. Yet the 'comedia' was born of direct contact with humanity, and man remained the centre of interest.

The first essential of a successful Spanish 'comedia' was a good story with thrilling intrigue and abundant action. The plot had to be complicated and skilfully developed. The members of a Spanish audience demanded from their theatre entertainment before all else. They had little desire to listen to preaching or moralising; they mainly asked to be amused. The analysis of character interested them little. The subtle psychological works of many modern Spanish playwrights would have made little appeal to a 'Siglo de Oro' audience. A national background was preferred for the 'comedia', in which were to be found certain elements inherent in the national consciousness. Therefore the same subjects, for example, patriotism, religion, 'pundonor', appeared and reappeared persistently in Spanish 'Comedias': subjects which made particular appeal to the people of Spain but were not of great interest to the peoples of other European nations.

When considering the strength of Spain's dramatic

production, we must not forget that Spanish genius seemed to possess gifts and qualities eminently suited to the writing of plays. First of these qualities was realism, without which the theatre could never have reached such heights. This power of observation and truthful reproduction made of the drama a real thing which appealed to and held its audience. Warm, living, Spanish realism laid the foundation of the success of the national 'comedia'. Along with this realism there was a sense of the theatre, which was possessed by most Spanish dramatists. They excelled in creating situations and unravelling plots, while many of them showed remarkable perfection of technique. Nor did they lack creative power, imagination, and a certain spontaneous passion necessary for the achievement of any really great work. This national Spanish 'comedia' was more a product of intuition than of studied thought. It was a vital, spontaneous thing which throbbed and pulsed with the life of a nation.

Spanish 'comedia' of the 'Siglo de Oro' was indebted hardly at all to the ancient Greek and Roman drama or to the contemporary French classical drama. Lope de Vega admitted that he was acquainted with the rule of the Three

(1) Lope de Vega's *Comedias* on this theme. Lope de Vega *Comedias*. II. 40-41.

(2) Term used by the Spanish dramatist Bartolomé de Torres Naharro (c. 1531-1571).

Unities and with the precepts for the correct writing of plays; but he confessed that in practice he ignored these theories.

"Y cuando he de escribir una comedia,
"Encierro los preceptos con seis llaves." (1)

The unity of Action, however, was generally observed, as too many episodes would have confused and wearied the members of the audience. But this was merely a question of common-sense and not a submission to a pseudo-Aristotelian decree. The rule simply coincided with the natural instinct of Spanish dramatists.

Originally there were five acts (*jornadas*)⁽²⁾ in a Spanish 'comedia'. Later there were four, and finally in the 'Siglo de Oro' that number was reduced to three. The story had to be carefully developed during the first two acts, and every effort made to capture and retain the attention of the audience. On no account should the dénouement be sensed before the middle of the last act, at the earliest: otherwise "Le public, prévenu trop tôt de la solution du problème, se désintéresse de la pièce et

(1) *Arte Nuevo de Hacer Comedias en este tiempo*. Lope de Vega Carpio. ll. 40-41.

(2) Term used by the Spanish dramatist Bartolomé de Torres Naharro (? - 1531?)

"n'éprouve nulle envie d'en entendre plus long. Il
 "tourne le dos à la scène et prend la porte."⁽¹⁾ This
 rule was of great importance in the drama of Spain and
 was also observed in the French theatre.

In his book of dramatic theory⁽²⁾ Lope de Vega advis-
 ed dramatists to write their 'comedias' in prose. But no
 one obeyed this rule, least of all Lope himself, who, know-
 ing the popular taste, wrote his masterpieces in verse -
 verse of amazing richness and variety, full of beauty and
 colour. As the master dramatist advocated variety in
 matter, so he approved of variety in form. He laid down
 rules for the guidance of playwrights with regard to the
 special uses of metres. "Lope estipuló ciertas formas
 "métricas, como peculiarmente predispuestas a la diversidad
 "de motivos y escenas de una misma obra; las décimas, para
 "los lamentos; el romance, para la exposición; la
 "lira, para la declamación heroica; la redondilla, para
 "los coloquios y conceptos de amor."⁽³⁾ The verse in which

(1) La Comedia Espagnole du XVIIe. siècle. A. Morel-Fatio.
 (Paris 1923) p.39.

(2) Arte Nuevo de Hacer Comedias en este tiempo. Lope de
 Vega Carpio. l 210.

(3) Las Máscaras. Ramón Pérez de Ayala. (Madrid 1924)
 Vol.II., p.69.

the Spanish 'Siglo de Oro comedia' was written, therefore, was rich, varied and full of such sonorous epithets and colourful phrases as delighted the hearts of the Spanish people. Yet sometimes we are tempted to wonder whether this beautiful verse was entirely suitable for the Spanish 'comedia'. At times, it rose to heights more in keeping with tragedy.

The 'comedia' was essentially a work of improvisation, and, as a result, productivity was a natural characteristic of almost all Spanish authors. Another very important reason for the extraordinary fertility of Spanish playwrights was that the appetite of the nation for 'comedias' seemed insatiable. As the demand became more and more insistent, the authors were harrassed and rushed. They had to produce so many plays in a limited space of time that often their aim became quantity and not quality of production. Frequently also the remuneration given to the dramatist for his works was so inadequate that he was forced to write many plays merely to make a living. Yet whatever was the cause of the haste, hurried work did not make for artistic restraint, deep psychological studies, nor accurate detail; and in many 'comedias' there were

(1) Los Famosos comediantes.

(2) Arte Nuevo de Hacer Comedias en verso rítmico. Diego de Vega Carpio. II, 45-46.

apparent exaggerations, poor characterisation, bad composition and a general lack of style.

Many of these characteristics were due to the people of Spain themselves, for the 'comedia' was essentially popular in inspiration. Throughout the centuries plays were written mainly to entertain all classes of the Spanish people; for all were interested in the theatre. A great love of the dramatic and the spectacular, whether in the arena or on the stage, was and is deeply rooted in the inhabitants of Spain. Therefore the opinion of the masses had a very strong influence on the Spanish 'comedia'. Lope de Vega himself recognised their power and catered for their tastes, rather than his own.

"Y escribo por el arte que inventaron
 "Los que el vulgar aplauso pretendieron;
 "Porque, como las⁽¹⁾ paga el vulgo, es justo
 "Hablarle en necio para darle gusto."⁽²⁾

The members of the audience had always the power to decide whether a play was to be a success or a failure. The dramatist might write as he thought fit, the producer and the actors give their interpretations and even the critics

(1) Las = las comedias.

(2) Arte Nuevo de Hacer Comedias en este tiempo. Lope de Vega Carpio. ll. 45-48.

write favourably; but the audience always had the final word and unhesitatingly indicated satisfaction or disapproval. So the Spanish public, particularly ruthless in its verdicts, decided to a large extent the nature of its own national drama.

Thus, naturally enough, Spanish 'comedias' were judged, not according to the rules of Aristotle or Boileau but according to the standards of the whole Spanish people. There were some early attempts⁽¹⁾ to classicise the Spanish drama and mould it on the lines of Plautus and Terence, but these efforts proved futile. "The refinement of the upper classes did not, in Spain, defeat the preferences of the general public."⁽²⁾ This truth is of great importance, for we must realise that it was not the Intelligentsia which formed the Spanish 'comedia' but it was Juan López himself with whom the dramatists had to reckon. Morel-Fatio has observed: "On ne peut pas contenter tout le monde, et qui veut attirer le 'vulgo' doit lui plaire par des procédés à son usage."⁽³⁾ There was truth in the

(1) Bartolomé de Torres Naharro (? - 1531?).

(2) Dramatic Theory in Spain. H. J. Chaytor. (Cambridge 1925). Introduction p.X.

(3) La Comedia Espagnole du XVIIe. Siècle. A. Morel-Fatio. (Paris 1923) p.60.

statement of the French critic, for the Spanish public was responsible for many of the faults in its own 'comedia'. Yet let us never lose sight of this much more important fact, that to the public of Spain was due a large share of the glory of its 'comedia'; for without the support of the people of Spain, the Spanish 'Comedia', as we know it, would never have come into existence. In its place there would have arisen a very different type of dramatic production, probably in imitation of the drama of Italy or of France.

The origins of the Spanish drama are obscure, and unfortunately there are now in existence very few of the early plays. We know that dramatic performances were given in connection with different festivals of the church and that these had a didactic purpose. They were very popular and flourished for many centuries, having died out in European countries long before they ceased in Spain. Soon the presence of a secular element made itself felt. Some dramatists imitated Latin authors, particularly Terence and Plautus. Small bands of actors gave performances of farces, and on festive occasions, dramatic pieces were read or played in the castles of nobles. Towards the

end of the fifteenth century there appeared the Celestina, a novel in dramatic form, which had a very strong influence on the nascent drama. This work was notable for the beginning of that realism which has always been so prominent a feature of the Spanish theatre and for its clear forceful style.

Ultimately out of all this chaos there was evolved a drama which was crude and unpolished but which did give promise of future greatness. The profane drama was firmly established by Encina,⁽¹⁾ to whom the honour of being the first real Spanish playwright may be assigned. His works were imitated by Vicente,⁽²⁾ whose later pieces, in which tragedy and comedy mingled, showed a considerable advance on those of his master. The Spanish theatre also owed much to Naharro⁽³⁾ who was the first author to lay down definite rules for the production of dramas, and in whose works there appeared for the first time that idea of feminine honour which became such a strong feature of the Spanish 'comedia'.

(1) Juan del Encina (1469? - 1529?).

(2) Gil Vicente (1465? - 1536?).

(3) Bartolomé de Torres Naharro (? - 1531?).

The forward movement continued steadily and the ground was prepared thoroughly for the great men who were later to appear. This development was helped by Rueda⁽¹⁾, an actor, who had a practical knowledge of stage requirements and whose chief contribution to the Spanish drama lay in his 'pasos'⁽²⁾. Although not an author of great genius, Rueda popularised the theatre and firmly established it in the affections of the whole Spanish nation. The popular drama was further strengthened and moulded by Cueva⁽³⁾, who indicated very definitely the direction⁽⁴⁾ which the 'Siglo de Oro comedia' was to take and the original form in which it was to develop.

After about a century of experiment, the Spanish 'comedia' had now taken shape, and it passed into the hands of the immortal genius Lope de Vega⁽⁵⁾, who set his stamp on

(1) Lope de Rueda (1510? - 1565).

(2) These developed later into the 'entremeses' of Cervantes and afterwards into the 'sainetes' of Ramón de la Cruz.

(3) Juan de la Cueva (1550? - 1610?).

(4) Cueva ignored the dramatic Unities, chose national episodes as the subjects of many of his works, and employed varied metres.

(5) Lope Felix de Vega Carpio (1562 - 1635).

it for all time and left it, enriched and beautified, a popular national theatre, worthy of the great people it represented. His works were vast in number, and all types of dramatic production were handled by him with equal facility. He completely dominated the Spanish stage and was an inspiration to many other dramatists. The whole story of this period of Spanish dramatic art was one of unparalleled fertility and genius. Then appeared Calderón⁽¹⁾ whose versatility, imagination, mastery of language, and poetical gifts were incomparable. Yet we feel that during the last years of Calderón's long life, ideas and conditions were changing and that the end of the glorious period of the Spanish 'comedia' was approaching.

It is from the conclusion of this period that there will be traced the further evolution of the Spanish 'comedia' and its development through the neo-classic period, the Romantic age, and the years of Realist reaction up to the present day, particularly within the period from 1835 to 1898. As has been indicated, the 'comedia' possessed some clearly defined national characteristics, and it will

(1) Pedro Calderón de la Barca (1600 - 1681).

be shown how far these have persisted during the centuries and how far certain other influences, internal and external, have helped to modify the national tendencies.

P A R T 1.

CHAPTER I.NEO-CLASSICISM (1700-1808).

When Calderón died in 1681 (and even some ten years before that date), there were clear indications of the moribund condition of the national Spanish 'Comedia'. Spanish literature as a whole, indeed, was markedly affected and showed signs of great exhaustion as if resulting from the preceding period of extraordinary productivity. We must bear in mind that to a certain extent this decadence was a natural one and that the sterility of the eighteenth century was accentuated by comparison with the glorious literary achievement of the preceding age. Towards the end of the seventeenth century, much emphasis came to be laid on the spectacular side of dramatic production. Stage settings became complicated, scenery was frequently changed, costumes were gaudy, and various kinds of artificial devices were used in order to attract audiences.

Resort to such artifices was ominous, for it indicated that the theatre was becoming dependent for its popularity on outward display.

It has been shown that the Spanish 'comedia' was not at any time written by rule of thumb but was a free form of dramatic art, reflecting the national consciousness of Spain, not recognising the classical Unities and depending entirely on the natural inclinations of the author. Its genius was mightiest when it was free and untrammelled. Lope, Tirso and the others had all been men of talent, invention and imagination; and the 'comedia' had fared well in their hands. But authors of little talent require signposts and guiding lines if they are to keep on the proper path, and by this time the 'comedia' had fallen into the hands of authors, many of whom had no real ability. Some of them lacked even common-sense. We are made aware of the need for guidance in the works of those followers of Calderón. Not being themselves endowed with remarkable talent or good taste, they were likely to find conventional rules and limitations an aid and not a handicap. As they had no originality they merely imitated and reproduced, and their works showed all the defects of the 'comedia'.

(1) Valladares de Sotomayor.

So much were its faults exaggerated that it was distorted almost beyond recognition. In these works we find everywhere exaggeration and inaccuracy. Plots were ridiculous and melodramatic, and the psychology was extremely weak. The style was often most unsuitable, and examples of prolixity, gongorism, and conceptism abounded. The depths to which the authors descended are almost unbelievable, and many of the productions were absurd. Yet the public supported and encouraged those writers, refusing to desert the 'comedia' which it had done so much to create.

During the last years of the seventeenth century and at the beginning of the eighteenth century, there were numerous dramatists, vying with each other in the imitation of Calderón. They contributed nothing of value to the Spanish theatre. Speaking of the hundred dramatic productions of one⁽¹⁾ of their number, Escovar y la Vega advise their readers not to consider these works at all, "porque sólo sirven para mostrarnos las escasas dotes literarias de su autor y la ignorancia completa de los

(1) Valladares de Sotomayor.

"principios del arte."⁽¹⁾ Most of the defects of the period were shown in the works of Diamante⁽²⁾ and Cándamo⁽³⁾, and yet those of the former were very popular, especially his historical plays, while those of the latter appear to have been well received by the public. The works of Calderón were imitated by Zamora⁽⁴⁾ and Cañizares⁽⁵⁾, in whose productions there is discernible the influence of the French theatre. It is interesting to find these traces thus early in the eighteenth century with writers of the national type of dramatic production. They also wrote successful 'comedias de figurón', a national type of play, in which the plot depended upon the peculiarities of one outstanding character. Cañizares, for example, excelled in his El Domine Lucas, which according to Romera-Navarro: "Es de las piezas más regocijadas, de mayor fuerza cómica

(1) Historia del Teatro Español. Escovar y la Vega. (Barcelona 1924) Vol.I., p.327.

(2) Juan Bautista Diamante (1625 - 1687). It is interesting to note that Cotarelo y Mori makes some very favourable comments on this author in his critical work, 'Don J. B. Diamante y sus Comedias'. (Madrid 1916)

(3) Francisco Cándamo (1662 - 1704).

(4) Antonio de Zamora (1660 - 1728).

(5) José de Cañizares (1676 - 1750).

"del teatro español."⁽¹⁾ Afterwards the supporters of the national 'comedia' appeared to degenerate still further, and about the end of the eighteenth century there flourished Comella⁽²⁾, the least adequate, yet best known of the type.

Such then was the state into which the 'comedia' had fallen at the beginning of the eighteenth century, and the time was ripe for a change of direction in the development of the Spanish 'comedia'. There were political and social reasons for this decadence, apart from the natural exhaustion and lassitude which might be expected to succeed a period of extraordinary fertility, as was mentioned at the beginning of the chapter. Spain's position among the nations had changed. At the beginning of the seventeenth century she was respected among the nations of Europe and her prestige was high. Spaniards were free to enjoy the blessings of prosperity and to write of the glories of their country. Frequently the periods of a nation's greatness and the periods of her literary excellence coincide,

(1) Historia de la Literatura Española. M. Romera-Navarro. (Boston 1928) p.427.

(2) Luciano Francisco Comella (1751 - 1812).

and this was particularly so during the first part of the 'Siglo de Oro'. By the end of the seventeenth century Spain had lost all her old prestige. The country was exhausted after numerous wars, and the public was depressed and disillusioned. During the reign of Charles II. the fortunes of the country were low indeed. Education and the arts and sciences were neglected, and it is not surprising that the general decadence of the country was reflected in the literature of the day and very particularly in the drama.

Under such conditions the Bourbon dynasty came to Spain, and French influence began to make itself felt in manners, clothes, culture, and literature. French rationalistic ideas prevailed and French philosophy was studied. Interest in scientific research spread, and a spirit of enquiry was abroad. Criticism, which is not a natural quality of the inhabitants of Spain, was more widely cultivated. Books were published with valuable contributions to sciences of all kinds and reviews appeared regularly. 'Tertulias' met and argued over the matters of the moment, Academies were founded, and schools of different types were opened all over the country. Thus the beginning of the

eighteenth century saw a real revival in sciences and culture in Spain. In the words of Azorín: "Se caracteriza este siglo por un férvido renacimiento del espíritu crítico: se hacen numerosos estudios sobre Medicina, Botánica, Filología, Historia, Crítica Literaria, Numismática; comienza a brotar durante ese período histórico el espíritu moderno."⁽¹⁾ Yet we must keep in mind that this movement was not general but confined to the upper classes, while the ordinary Spaniard remained true to his own national traditions.

Such were a few of the general influences of French ideas in Spain at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Our main concern, however, is with French influence on Spanish literature and particularly on the Spanish theatre. The rules of the French classical school were based on ideas of precision, reason, and restraint. Everything must be kept carefully within the limits of academic good taste. All works had to be characterised by sobriety of language and thought and the Three Unities were to be observed. French classicism in its narrow form meant the

(1) Lecturas Españolas. Azorín. (Madrid 1912) p.73.

writing of plays according to strict rules and the suppression of a great deal of originality and imagination. These rules might be quite suitable for a logical, precise people like the French but, in their extreme form, they were likely to prove a source of irritation and repression to the Spanish temperament. Espino has expressed this idea well in his essay on the drama. He says: "Es verdad "también que la gran extensión y rigidez de sus principios "eran un fuerte muro, contra el cual quebraba el genio sus "rayos de fuego y rompía la imaginación sus alas de mariposa."⁽¹⁾ All through the eighteenth century the Spanish people remained faithful to the traditions of their old national theatre, bitterly condemning and opposing the theories of the new school.

It is worth noting at this point that the classical influence which was felt in Spain at the beginning of the eighteenth century was widespread and had affected all the important countries of Europe. For the first time the Spanish theatre came under the influence of clearly defined doctrines, which crossed the Pyrenees, not as representing

(1) Ensayo Histórico-Crítico del Teatro Español. Álvarez Espino. (Cádiz 1876) p.274.

the theories of France alone but as the accepted ideas of the whole of Europe. Even if the Bourbon dynasty had not succeeded to the Spanish throne at this period, it would scarcely have been possible for Spain to escape this influence. Under any king the neo-classic movement would have assuredly come into being. It might have been less strong and less effective, but it would have done its work sufficiently well. Menéndez y Pelayo is quite definite on this point when he says, "Fué un movimiento común a toda Europa en el siglo XVIII. y del cual no se salvaron ni Italia, ni Inglaterra, ni Alemania, donde no existían las razones políticas que parecían favorecerle en España."⁽¹⁾ Moreover the day had arrived when a reformation was necessary. Spaniards of culture and patriotism bewailed the desperate condition of the Spanish national theatre, which was not respected among people of good taste at home and which was mocked at abroad. They were delighted to welcome new theories of restraint and precision, which would, they hoped, reform the theatre; but those theories would have been welcomed even had a Bourbon not been on the

(1) Historia de las Ideas Estéticas en España. Menéndez y Pelayo. (Madrid 1883-91) Vol.III., p.288.

Spanish throne to give them his support, because of the clamant need for reform in the Spanish theatre.

The ideas of the French classical school were disseminated in Spain, but it was not till the year 1737 that anything of outstanding importance happened. In that year there was published a work which contained all the theories of Neo-classicism and formed, as it were, the declaration of faith of the new school. In La Poética, Luzán⁽¹⁾ devoted about a third of the book to a discussion on the drama and illustrated his points by frequent references to the Spanish theatre of the past. His doctrines, although closely resembling those of Boileau, appeared to be based on the ideas of the Italian school. Menéndez y Pelayo emphasised this point and deduced that this fact of Italian origin was responsible for the greater fairness and tolerance of Luzán's view, as shown at least in the 1737 edition of his works. Menéndez y Pelayo said, "El "clasicismo italiano ha sido siempre mucho más libre, más "variado, menos convencional, menos rígido y meticuloso, "y por decirlo todo de una vez, más poético y menos

(1) Ignacio de Luzán (1702 - 1754).

"oratorio que el clasicismo francés,"⁽¹⁾ and so he found this work slightly less narrow than if it had been of French origin. Yet Luzán was very definite in his rulings and, although a man of great intellectual capacity, showed at times a very limited understanding of his subject. He insisted on complete separation of tragic and comic elements and promoted tragedy to a very high position in the theatre. He also advocated rigid observance of the Three Unities on all occasions and laid emphasis upon the didactic conception of the drama. His criticism of the great authors of the 'Siglo de Oro' was severe. He began by finding qualities to praise and then proceeded to condemn their faults whole-heartedly. These authors did not observe the Unities; their works abounded in exaggerations and inaccuracies, no moral purpose was present in their plays, and the psychology was extremely feeble. Luzán applied neo-classic rules to the works of the old masters, and very naturally they fell short of his requirements. "Yerra en el punto fundamental de aplicar las reglas clásicas al arte eminentemente libre, romántico y nacional

(1) Historia de las Ideas Estéticas en España. Menéndez y Pelayo. (Madrid 1883-91) Vol.III., p.331.

"de nuestros autores del Siglo de Oro."⁽¹⁾ Nevertheless, he was not as bigoted as some of his followers, for example, Montiano⁽²⁾ or Nasarre, and his attacks on the 'Siglo de Oro' dramatists were not so venomous. La Poética was an exceedingly important work, and its influence was long felt. Although it was impossible to get rid of all the degenerate writers of the age, Luzán did much by his sound criticism and his sane common-sense to discourage many of the poorer dramatic productions of the age. His achievement was most noteworthy from the point of view of destructive criticism.

Many other writers of the period supported Luzán's theories, violently attacking the works of inferior national playwrights and even in many cases condemning the 'comedias' of the 'Siglo de Oro' dramatists, without recognising that a different standard of criticism was necessary in the case of Calderón, Lope, Tirso, the geniuses of the preceding century. But no quarter was given by the supporters of the Gallicist cause. Nasarre and Montiano were two of the champions of the theories of the new school, the views of

(1) Historia de la Literatura Española. Romera-Navarro. (Boston 1928) p.424.

(2) Agustín Montiano y Luyando (1697-1764); Blas Antonio Nasarre (1689-1751).

the latter being especially bitter and fanatical. Naturally the Spanish people would not listen in silence to such criticisms of their national writers, and we find indignant answers to the accusations and spirited defences of the national 'comedia'. War was declared, therefore, between the two parties - one which represented the doctrines of French Classicism, the rules of reason, logic and culture, as its supporters claimed; the other standing fast for the national Spanish theatre with its freedom and natural inspiration. On the one side were ranged the select forces of power, culture and education, the intelligentsia of Spain, and on the other, indignant and defiant, the Spanish people, ready to defend obstinately their own beloved productions. This warfare lasted during the whole of the eighteenth century. As one critic said, "Por una parte iban los literatos y por otra el público: literatos y público no vuelven a encontrarse hasta que aquéllos se hicieron románticos."⁽¹⁾

The neo-classic movement appears to have had all the heavy artillery on its side. The 'salones' and 'tertulias'

(1) La literatura Española. A. Salcedo Ruiz. (Madrid 1916) Vol.III., p.8.

of the period, founded in imitation of French 'salons' were sources of strength and renewed vigour for the 'afrancesado' movement. Meetings of the 'Academia del Buen Gusto', and later the gatherings at the 'Fonda de San Sebastián' in Madrid, urged on the Gallicists to further endeavour. The leading spirits of the movement came together, discussed literary theories and planned systematic opposition to the national theatre.

Journalism also played a very important part in the controversy. Some of the journals only published sane, moderate opinions. Such a publication was El Diario de los Literatos de España. Others were bitter and unfair in their criticisms of the 'comedia', while the defence of the national theatre was spirited but unavailing. In theory it seemed as though the French school were triumphing. By the middle of the century "The three Madrid stock companies "gave themselves over exclusively to translations of French "and Italian dramas".⁽¹⁾ Later, Moratín, the elder, and Clavijo, the editor of an extremely biased neo-classic journal, El Pensador, united to attack violently Calderón

(1) Study of Spanish Manners from the Plays of Ramón de la Cruz. Arthur Hamilton. (Illinois 1926) p.7.

and his school and demand the prohibition of the playing of 'autos sacramentales' on the ground that these were in bad taste, a mixture of the sacred and profane, and their production often led to scandalous scenes. The Count of Aranda, who was in power at the time, was an enthusiastic 'afrancesado' and decided that one of the main points in his policy should be to bring enlightenment and culture to Spain by means of the neo-classic movement. The government therefore officially supported and helped the neo-classic school. In 1765 a royal decree came into force, prohibiting the production of 'autos', and later other regulations were issued with regard to plays and actors. A list of approved pieces was published, and an official band of actors was created. Finally in 1770 all theatrical productions except those of French or Italian origin were prohibited. Fortunately this state of affairs lasted only three years, as the ban was raised in 1773 when Aranda fell from power. Nevertheless, the government continued its support of Neo-classicism practically to the end of the eighteenth century. Every obstacle was put in the way of the production of national 'comedias' and every encouragement given to the authors of the 'afrancesado' school.

Yet the Spanish people clung tenaciously to their ideals, and never once during the long period of the struggle did they desert the traditional Spanish theatre. Despite steady organised opposition, the public continued to attend their own theatres where 'Siglo de Oro' works were produced. "A pesar de la oposición académica las comedias "de Calderón seguían representándose en España en los dos "últimos tercios del siglo XVIII y eran aplaudidos por el "pueblo."⁽¹⁾ They would welcome an adaptation of a 'Siglo de Oro' work or even a piece by one of the degenerate national playwrights, but would not tolerate the productions of the neo-classic authors, who may have been able to theorise regarding the writing of plays but could not put their theories worthily into practice.

The first half of the eighteenth century was spent mainly in criticising and theorising, and no dramatic works of note were written. It is only about 1750 that we find creative force asserting itself again. There had been translations of French works earlier in the century, for the Marqués de San Juan had translated Corneille's Cinna

(1) Historia de la Literatura Española. Hurtado y Palencia.
(Madrid 1921) p.725.

into Spanish as early as 1713. Then, after the publication of Luzán's Poética, there appeared a very large number of translations from the French. Original works of the neo-classic school were, to a large extent, classical tragedies, pale, lifeless copies of those of the French school. It was natural that tragedy should be so much in evidence at this period, for, according to Luzán, the tragic and comic elements should be completely separated. Hence there came into being the genre of pure tragedy, which had been practically unknown in the national Spanish theatre. These tragedies were written strictly in accordance with all the theories of the neo-classic school. Despite all the good intentions of their authors, the results, with few exceptions, were poor. The works were pedantic, uninteresting and uninspired, written according to rule, but without any originality or genius. Few of the neo-classic tragedies were even read, very few were produced and none was really successful. Actors were unwilling to take parts in these cold works of art; they generally refused and, if pressure was brought to bear and they were forced to act in them, they often did so with a grudge. We may conclude, therefore, that the parts in those dramatic productions

(3) Nicolás Fernández de Moratín (1737 - 1780).

(4) This was the first neo-classic work to be produced.

must have been very indifferently played at times.

The first two tragedies in the classical vein were written by Montiano y Luyando⁽¹⁾, the eminent critic, who was eager to illustrate and confirm the dramatic doctrines of which he was such an ardent supporter. These were Virginia (1750) and Ataulfo (1753), and both were failures. They were not produced and did not deserve to be. They were rigidly classical in form, but possessed neither originality nor inspiration. In fact, it is unlikely that they were even read by the general public. Their form also left much to be desired. Menéndez y Pelayo was sweeping in his condemnation of Montiano's verses. He says, "No conozco en castellano versos sueltos peores que los de Montiano, duros unas veces, arrastrados casi siempre, mal acentuados de continuo y hasta mal medidos."⁽²⁾

The productions of the older Moratín⁽³⁾ were perhaps a trifle more successful than those of Montiano. He did have one⁽⁴⁾ of his tragedies produced and it actually ran

(1) Agustín Montiano y Luyando (1697 - 1764).

(2) Historia de las Ideas Estéticas en España. Menéndez y Pelayo. (Madrid 1883-91). Vol.III., p.382.

(3) Nicolás Fernández de Moratín (1737 - 1780).

(4) This was the first neo-classic work to be produced.

to six performances. Hormesinda (1770) as it was called, would probably never have been staged at all if it had not been for the backing Moratín received from Count Aranda and even his support was not sufficient to prevent the failure of the piece afterwards. Nicolás Moratín's fame did not depend on his tragic productions. He was known better as a critic, who did his utmost to correct abuses of the national theatre, and also as a lyric poet, entirely in line with the national tradition. "Las doctrinas literarias que hacía alarde de profesar aparecen en abierta discordancia con su genialidad poética enteramente española y romántica."⁽¹⁾ This dual personality is most perplexing and we puzzle over the question as to which was the real Moratín. Probably he became entangled with the doctrines of Neo-classicism, studied its theories and came to believe in the school so firmly that as far as his drama was concerned, his real personality was submerged.

There were other authors also who attempted to write tragedy according to classical rules, but not one of them was really successful. Cadalso's Sancho García (1771) was

(1) Historia de las Ideas Estéticas en España. Menéndez y Pelayo. (Madrid 1883-91) Vol. IV., p.21.

produced and appeared for five nights only. The Numancia Destruída (1775) of L6pez de Ayala showed defects in plot but possessed passages of beauty and nobility. Good characterisation and pleasant style drew attention to Munuza (1792) by Jovellanos and of the tragedies of the impetuous Cienfuegos, Zoraida is the best. Even later, the patriotic Quintana wrote many tragedies, of which Pelayo (1805), the least inspiring, was fairly successful, because its theme of independence suited the taste of the public at that time. Taken as a whole, it can be clearly seen that those imitations of classical tragedy were failures, and it is therefore useless to concern ourselves further with them.

The first comedy published according to the new rules was a translation of La Chaussée's Préjugé à la Mode, by Luzán (1751). Eleven years later, there appeared in print the first original comedy of the 'afrancesado' school, La Petimetra (1762), by Nicolás Moratín. This comedy was something of a compromise between the two schools, as its theme and versification were really Spanish, while on other points it conformed to the rules of Neoclassicism. The work was not presented on the stage and

(5) Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos (1744 - 1811).

was of small literary value. The two first comedies of the French type to be produced in a theatre were El Señorito Mimado (1788) and La Señorita Mal Criada (1791) by Iriarte⁽¹⁾, who tried to infuse some life into the comedy of manners and succeeded fairly well. According to Menéndez y Pelayo, "Iriarte fué el verdadero predecesor "de Moratín en el cultivo de la comedia clásica."⁽²⁾ Thus, although his two pieces are now forgotten, Iriarte did have a certain importance in the development of the drama of his day.

There was apparent one other trace of French influence on the Spanish drama of the period, when Jovellanos⁽³⁾ produced El Delincuente Honrado (1774). This sentimental comedy was written in imitation of the 'comédie larmoyante' of the French author Diderot and was a condemnation of the severity of the laws against the fighting of duels. The choice of subject was a popular one with Spaniards, and as the piece was written in good prose and the action was well

(1) Tomás de Iriarte (1750 - 1791).

(2) Historia de las Ideas Estéticas en España. Menéndez y Pelayo. (Madrid 1883-1891) Vol.IV., p.44.

(3) Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos (1744 - 1811).

(1) Obras Completas. Juan Valera. Vol. LVIII., p.302.

developed, the comedy was quite successful. From the modern standpoint the piece is melodramatic, but in this very fault lay its appeal as its sentimentality formed a contrast and relief to the cool classic aloofness.

It is evident then, that, although the Gallicist theorists appeared to win the day, yet the dramatists of the 'afrancesado' school could produce nothing of lasting interest, either in tragedy or in comedy. The truth is that the authors who bestirred themselves to efforts of dramatic composition within neo-classic rules had little talent and no original inspiration. Their main idea was to write plays according to regulation, and the result of their labours was unsatisfying. Besides, the general public, before whom the plays had to make their appearance, was not interested in the classical rules; indeed, for the most part, the members of the audience were bitterly opposed to them. Unless a certain sympathy exists between playwright and audience, it is an impossibility for any dramatic piece to be successful. "Es menester que su espíritu (del "autor dramático) esté en íntima y constante comunicación "con el espíritu de un público numeroso: que él y dicho "público se comprendan y se compenetren."⁽¹⁾ Therefore

(1) Obras Completas. Juan Valera. Vol. XXVIII., p.302.

the works of those dramatists of the neo-classic school were bound to fail on the Spanish stage since the members of the general public were so antagonistic to their theories and principles.

The national party was by no means silent during these years, for Cañizares⁽¹⁾ and Zamora⁽²⁾ wrote plays in the first half of the century. There were other writers, imitators or adapters of the national 'comedias' and also some original authors who wrote nonsense. Such a one was Añorbe, whose piece Paulino (1740) was severely criticised by Luzán. There was one name which stood out above the rest, as the leader of the national dramatic school and the champion of the 'Siglo de Oro' theatre, that of Huerta⁽³⁾. After he had decided what his opinions really were, he never wavered in his allegiance to the cause of the national drama. His work was limited in quantity, his two most important contributions being a translation of Voltaire's Zaïre, and Raquel (1778), a classical tragedy,

(1) José de Cañizares (1676 - 1750).

(2) Antonio de Zamora (1660 - 1728).

(3) Vicente de la Huerta (1734 - 1787).

which aroused great enthusiasm among the public who were present at its production. This apparently classical work conformed outwardly to the rules of the 'afrancesado' party, but in every other way the piece was national and Spanish. It was really a 'comedia' in the approved style of the old national dramatists and made appeal both in spirit and in form. Huerta succeeded in inspiring the cold classic tragedy with warm, living, Spanish spirit. "El secreto de este éxito estaba en que la Raquel era una "tragedia clásica sólo en la forma y en cambio en el fondo "era una comedia heroica, como las de Calderón, Diamante o "Cándamo, con el espíritu de honor y de galantería, versos "entonados y pomposos en romance en decasílabo de marcado "carácter nacional." (1) His ideal was excellent, namely to combine all that was best in the national 'comedia' with the good sense and logic of the 'afrancesados'. Unfortunately he was always engaged in violent quarrels with one or other of his literary opponents, otherwise he might have made a larger contribution to the national drama of the period. Menéndez y Pelayo has boundless admiration for

(1) Historia de la Literatura Española. Hurtado y Palencia. (Madrid 1921) p.860.

this dramatist and goes so far as to say that, in Huerta's conception of dramatic art, we see the same ideas as those which triumphed later in the Romantic school. The critic speaks in glowing terms of "La causa que sostenía, idéntica "en el fondo a la que luego triunfó con el romanticismo." (1)

Now we come to the two outstanding names in the Spanish theatre during the eighteenth century, Ramón de la Cruz and Leandro Fernández de Moratín, son of Nicolás Moratín. These two authors were very different in type. César Barja says of them, "Representan, en efecto, dos tendencias opuestas: "la tendencia nacional y popular aquél (Cruz), y la tendencia "extranjera (neo-clásica, francesa) éste. Es el primero el "dramaturgo nacional, por excelencia; es el segundo el "dramaturgo neo-clásico por excelencia." (2) There is much truth in this and yet it is not the whole truth of the matter, as Barja himself admits later. The problem was not so easily solved, nor was the division between the two so definite. They were not of absolutely "opposite tendencies", for, although Cruz was national and popular in his appeal,

(1) Historia de las Ideas Estéticas en España. Menéndez y Pelayo. (Madrid 1883-91) Vol.IV., p.73.

(2) Libros y Autores Modernos. César Barja. (Madrid 1925) p.97.

yet we find he conformed to the laws of good sense and reason. Similarly although Moratin was neo-classic in technique and form, there was much 'españolismo' in his ideas and inspiration.

The first plays of Ramón de la Cruz⁽¹⁾ were written according to the rules of the neo-classic school; but very soon the author must have realised that these doctrines did not suit his own particular type of genius, and he decided to abandon them and strike out boldly for himself. He produced a large number of Comedies and Tragedies and did works⁽²⁾ of translation and adaptation, for which alone his name would have been remembered. Yet his main contribution to the development of Spanish comedy did not lie in that direction. His fame rests not on his neo-classic productions but on the numerous 'sainetes' which he wrote for the enjoyment and entertainment of the Spanish people, who flocked to see his productions. He stands out in eighteenth century drama as the dramatist who, of set

(1) Ramón de la Cruz y Cano (1731 - 1794).

(2) Particularly plays of Molière.

purpose, wrote to please the people and trusted in their verdict as to the worth of his pieces. Popular opinion was definite and united solidly in support of Cruz and his works.

The form of dramatic production chosen by Cruz was not new, and it was national in origin, descending directly from the 'pasos' of Rueda and the 'entremeses' of Cervantes. It was called 'sainete' in the eighteenth century and was a short one act sketch, dealing humorously with contemporary customs and took about twenty or twenty-five minutes to present. "Este género es el que se conoce con el nombre "de sainete en la aceptación más lata de esta palabra, tal "como la tuvo en el siglo XVIII. Drama sin argumento, "pero no sin atractivo, reduce a un simple diálogo en que "predomina el elemento cómico. Elige sus personajes muchas "veces en las últimas capas sociales cuyo lenguaje y estilo "adopta."⁽¹⁾ Such was the type of comedy immortalised by Ramón de la Cruz.

In his 'sainetes' this author aimed principally at entertaining and amusing his public. Therefore the keynote

(1) Don Ramón de la Cruz y sus Obras. Cotarelo y Mori. (Madrid 1899) p.4.

of these short sketches was light humour and infectious gaiety. The characters were irrepressibly gay despite their poverty and troubles, and many of the situations were delightfully farcical. But underneath this bubbling gaiety we often find a serious, moralising note, more or less pronounced according to the subject of the 'sainete' in question. Cruz described the society of his time with its squalor, degeneracy and frivolity, and satirised those and other vices strongly, sometimes even maliciously. "Jamás pintó el vicio sino como altamente censurable y "digno de castigo."⁽¹⁾

The characters of the 'sainetes' were taken either from the lower middle class or from the proletariat of Madrid. The life of the poorer classes was excellently described, and we have pictures of them realistically presented in all different kinds of circumstances. "He (Cruz) "takes us into their homes, their working places, shows them "in every day life and on gala occasions, traces their nature, "their virtues and their vices."⁽²⁾ The author possessed

(1) Historia del Teatro Español. Escovar y la Vega. (Barcelona 1924) Vol.I., p.323.

(2) Study of Spanish Manners from the plays of Ramón de la Cruz. (Illinois 1926) Arthur Hamilton, p.10.

a knowledge of the type of humanity he chose to describe and employed a sympathetic irony in his impressions of the poor, whom he loved and pitied but did not flatter. His powers of observation were acute, and his reproduction was excellent. Thus his characters live before us. The bustle and animation of his crowds fascinate, and we are deeply interested in all his creations, whatever they may be, 'majos' or 'majas', 'petimetras', 'gitanos' or any other of his figures that flit across the stage.

The plot of the 'sainete', naturally enough, was very slender. Cruz made no attempt to develop a strong action and work it up to a thrilling dénouement. Probably his talent did not lie in that direction, and besides there was no necessity for a complicated plot in a one act comedy. The slightest incident may form the basis of a 'sainete', such as a picnic, a street brawl, a lovers' quarrel. These everyday occurrences are described in bright, animated, natural dialogue and are filled with typical witticisms and interspersed with snatches of national songs. The social conditions of the eighteenth century are vividly portrayed. The different quarters of Madrid, the markets, the houses, are described. All the varying types of

(2) Supported by Morante p.422, Fitzmaurice-Kelly p.418, and Hamilton p.9 (who affirms that Cruz in his 'sainetes' does his work with more detail and vividness than Goya).

society with their dresses and customs appear before us. "En efecto en sus obras vive y se agita una sociedad "entera hoy desaparecida; pero que gracias a tales "escritos podemos reconstruir casi con la misma verdad, "que si, por un milagro cronológico, retrocediésemos a "la España del reinado de Carlos IV."⁽¹⁾ His works serve us as standard books of reference with regard to everything pertaining to eighteenth century Madrid. It is stated by several⁽²⁾ critics that Cruz has evoked Spain of that period with his pen as vividly as did Goya with his brush.

The neo-classic rules did not greatly interest Cruz, because to a very large extent they did not require to be considered in the 'sainetes' which he wrote. These naturally conformed to the Three Unities. Cruz was well aware of all the laws of the 'afrancesados' but paid no attention to them except when they happened to coincide with his own ideas of his art. The neo-classic school strongly disapproved of his 'sainetes', and this disapproval was voiced by several 'afrancesados', notably Nicolás Moratín, Iriarte

(1) D. Ramón de la Cruz y sus Obras. Cotarelo y Mori. (Madrid 1899) p.1.

(2) Supported by Mérimée p.422, Fitzmaurice-Kelly p.418, and Hamilton p.9 (who affirms that Cruz in his 'sainetes' does his work with more detail and vividness than Goya).

and Clavijo. His works were criticised severely and often very unjustly. Doubtless jealousy was the cause of at least a part of the bitterness of the 'afrancesados', for it must have been extremely galling for them to compare their own failures with the noisy successes of the despised Ramón de la Cruz. One of the main points of the criticism was the bad choice of subjects made by Cruz. Finally this author lost all patience and defended himself and counter-attacked. His own defence of his choice of national themes, as published and recited in the Introduction to El Manolo is particularly interesting.

"Pues ¡qué! ¿faltan en Madrid
 "asuntos para tragedias
 "habiendo maridos pobres,
 "y mujeres petimetras....?"

"¿Qué país del universo
 "ofrece en todas materias
 "más héroes; ni en qué país
 "hay tantas civiles guerras
 "como aquí, que hay pretensiones,
 "primos, cuñados y suegras?"

Cotarelo y Mori in his study of Cruz calls him "el gran
 "autor cómico, el Lope de Vega del pasado siglo."⁽¹⁾

(1) Don Ramón de la Cruz y sus Obras. Cotarelo y Mori.
 (Madrid 1899) p.10.

In many ways the comparison is an apt one. Like Lope de Vega, Cruz ignored the classical rules, with which he was well acquainted and, defying critics, wrote to please the people. He entrusted his reputation to the members of the Spanish public in the belief that, in the long run, their verdict would be truer and more powerful than that of the critics. These two dramatic authors both enjoyed public favour to the full, despite the disapproving voices of the learned minority; and for about thirty years Cruz delighted his audiences with his productions. Both men had the gift of improvisation and both were prolific writers. Cruz (according to Cotarelo y Mori) produced sixty nine comedies, tragedies and zarzuelas, some printed, some in manuscript and some only mentioned by himself, and four hundred and seventy three 'sainetes' and other works of this genre. Yet in spite of the resemblances between Ramón de la Cruz and Lope de Vega, we must never forget that Cruz was different in that his genius was very typical of the eighteenth century. His keen wit in particular was distinctly characteristic of his time and much in advance of the heavy, obvious humour of the preceding century, which often degenerated into the knockabout variety.

Ramón de la Cruz was the outstanding figure among national dramatists during the eighteenth century. He embodied the spirit of Spain, adapting one of its own national forms of dramatic art and uniting humour with realism. Free and unshackled by narrow conventions, Cruz went his own way and achieved success. He was a writer who possessed genius, originality, and inspiration - and the courage to use them in his own individual way. His works, which are amusing even at the present day, must have been a revelation in that century when almost all dramatic productions were dry, cold and worthless.

No dramatic school was founded at this time to produce works similar to those of Ramón de la Cruz, although his sainetes were imitated by Juan del Castillo⁽¹⁾, who with about seventy short pieces did for Cadiz what his master had done for Madrid. Nevertheless it is to Ramón de la Cruz that we may attribute the rise of the 'género chico' which took place in the second half of the nineteenth century; and coming as far as present day dramatic literature, we can state that the 'sainetes' of Cruz are the ancestors

(1) Juan Ignacio González del Castillo (1763 - 1800).

of those delightfully witty, ironical sketches of the Quintero brothers. Thus the national spirit of the Spanish drama persists through the centuries.

The work of the other prominent figure in eighteenth century dramatic literature, Leandro Fernández de Moratín⁽¹⁾, was very different in many respects. This author supported the neo-classic school and condemned severely and scathingly the degenerate writers of national plays. It is worth noting that he had nothing but admiration for the many fine qualities of the 'Siglo de Oro' dramatists, particularly Lope de Vega. He was lavish in his praise of their comedies, while at the same time he realised and deplored the faults which were often apparent in them. The son was, therefore, a more just and moderate critic than his father Nicolás Fernández de Moratín, who could see nothing good in the works of the old national dramatists. Leandro Moratín's quarrel was only with the unskilled writers of his own century, and to these he showed no mercy. His personal opinion as to the relative value of the old masters and the bunglers of the day was clearly shown in the following sentence from one of his plays: "Valen más

(2) Luciano Francisco Comella (1751 - 1812).

(3) *La Comedia Nueva*. Act II., Scene 3.

(1) 1760 - 1828.

"Calderón, Solís, Rojas, Moreto, cuando deliran que
 "estotros, cuando quieren hablar con razón."⁽¹⁾ This
 piece, La Comedia Nueva (1792), which was one of Moratín's
 best works, was written on the subject of the inferior
 national dramatic productions. Comella⁽²⁾, the chief of
 the degenerates of the period, was supposed to be the prin-
 cipal character in this comedy, and his literary reputation,
 such as it was, was torn to shreds. The following extract
 illustrates the severe criticism passed on Comella and his
 like by Moratín: "No hay más que un hacinamiento confuso
 "de especies, una acción informe, lances inverisímiles,
 "episodios inconexos, caracteres mal expresados o mal
 "escogidos: en vez de situaciones cómicas, mamarrachadas
 "de linterna mágica: no hay conocimiento de historia ni
 "de costumbres: no hay objeto moral. ni hay lenguaje, ni
 "estilo, no versificación, ni gusto, ni sentido común."⁽³⁾
 In Moratín, therefore, we see admiration for the genius of
 the 'Siglo de Oro' dramatists and contempt for the works of

(1) La Comedia Nueva. Act II., Scene 5.

(2) Luciano Francisco Comella (1751 - 1812).

(3) La Comedia Nueva. Act II., Scene 5.

the unskilled supporters of the national drama. We appreciate his patriotic desire for improvement and his turning towards the neo-classic school with its cult of reason and common-sense in the hope that here lay the salvation of the Spanish drama. "Que el teatro español tiene de "sobra autorcillos chanflones que le abastezcan de mamar-rachos: que lo que necesita es una reforma fundamental "en todas sus partes." (1)

Moratin had very definite ideas with regard to the construction of comedies, and he carried these out systematically in his works. His conception of dramatic art was very narrow and very limited. He believed in the Three Unities and in the simple, logical development of the action, which was to aim at ridiculing some common social vice and thus recommend truth and virtue to the audience. Therefore from the very beginning, we realise that Moratin's contribution to Spanish dramatic literature was essentially neo-classic, in technique at any rate.

One of the characteristics of the comedies of Moratin was their moralising tendency. The author's purpose was didactic, and he constantly held up to ridicule the errors

(1) La Comedia Nueva. Act 1, Scene 4.

of the society of his generation. He criticised, for example, education or unsuitable marriages in a genial way, or bitterly satirised the works of his untalented contemporaries.

Moratin supported neo-classic theories and strictly obeyed the rules laid down by that school. He expected a very high standard in the works of other playwrights and criticised them when they fell short of it: but he was equally severe with himself, and he made every effort to adhere to neo-classic regulations especially with regard to the Unities. At times the neo-classic theories must have had a very restraining, repressing influence on Moratin's works, and it is to his credit that he wrote such successful comedies while he obeyed all rules so faithfully. "Moratin fue un genio dramático a pesar de "las tres unidades."⁽¹⁾ In addition, let us not forget that it is always especially difficult for a Spaniard to submit to confining rules, for Spanish genius is usually at its best when it is left free to follow its natural instinct. Therefore Moratin might have been a little

(1) Introducción al Teatro de Moratin. F. Ruiz Morcuende.
(Madrid 1933) p.41.



greater, attaining just that something which he lacks, if he had been somewhat bolder, had trusted more to his own genius and had at times broken away from the limiting, restraining neo-classic theories.

In practically all his dramatic works Moratín was a follower of Molière, whom he deliberately imitated. Perhaps he was also influenced slightly by Goldoni, the Italian writer of comedies of that time. There are critics who emphasise that Moratín belonged to the classic school of all time and state that his art was based mainly on imitation of the ancient classical comedy, particularly on that of Terence. Menéndez y Pelayo, the eminent critic, says "Moratín es de la familia de Terencio: ambos carecen "de fuerza cómica y de originalidad, y en ambos la nota "característica es una tristeza suave y benévola."⁽¹⁾

But it seems quite clear that it was Molière whom he admired and whose works he imitated. Moratín even adapted two of the Frenchman's comedies: La Escuela de los Maridos (1812) and El Médico a Palos (1814). This task was well done, for both the spirit and the comic element of the

(1) Historia de las Ideas Estéticas en España. (Madrid 1883-91) Vol.III., p.227.

(2) Introducción al Teatro de Moratín. F. Ruiz Marín. (Madrid 1933) p.41.

pieces were splendidly preserved. In his original works also, the deliberate imitation of Molière was often apparent, particularly in the characterisation and the development of the plot. Moratín's wit differed from that of the French dramatist, being much more restrained and dignified. He was determined to keep to the rules of good taste, and so he excluded from his works anything which might savour of buffoonery.

The Comedies of Moratín were all simply, but well constructed; the plot was slight but well developed and interesting. The characters were taken from the bourgeoisie and were carefully drawn. For the first time in the Spanish theatre we find the action subsidiary to the psychological interest of the piece. In fact, this type of comedy introduced by Moratín might be termed "comedia de costumbres", and we find a modified form of it persisting through the nineteenth century and even down to the modern period. Some of Benavente's comedies (especially those satirical ones dealing with middle class vices and virtues) resemble in some ways the works of Moratín. "Su labor, providamente beneficosa, abrió los surcos en que fructificaron las tendencias modernas."⁽¹⁾

(1) Introducción al Teatro de Moratín. F. Ruiz Morcuende. (Madrid 1933) p.41.

Moratin's literary style was excellent. His dialogue was simple yet bright and natural. All critics agree on this point and praise the beauty of his verses, the aptness of his choice of words. His style might perhaps lack colour but it excelled in restraint, elegance and good taste. We can see the same purity of style in some of the later dramatists.⁽¹⁾

If we wish to criticise this dramatic author we may accuse him of lack of passion, enthusiasm and sentiment. He thinks too much and feels little. Constantly pre-occupied with observation of neo-classic rules, he is afraid to be natural in case he offends one or other of the conventions.

Restraint and polish which characterise Moratin's work, were foreign to Spanish dramatic genius, up to the eighteenth century at least. These qualities were acquired; they were not natural. His strict observance of the Unities and of all the neo-classic technique, his limitation of the number of characters in his plays, the subordination of plot to delineation of character, all

(1) Tamayo y Baus (1829 - 1898).

these were signs of a new departure in Spanish dramatic art. They were definitely contrary to the methods employed by the great authors of the national 'comedia'. Moratín, likewise, was not typically Spanish in his productivity for he wrote only eight works (including the translation of Hamlet and his two adaptations of Molière's comedies). But he wrote sufficient to be a real force in dramatic progress.

Although the influence of the French school was extremely strong in the case of this author, we find it was an impossibility for him to cast aside completely all national dramatic characteristics. The form of his comedies, in which we find some failing of the principal character held up to ridicule, reminds us of the 'comedia de figurón', a popular national genre. The subjects of his comedies were national, dealing with the several problems of the eighteenth century Spaniard. Our conclusion on this point is that while Moratín was neo-classic in technique, he was national in spirit.

Moratín stood high in the estimation of his literary contemporaries, but he was not very popular with the ordinary Spanish public. His works appealed more to the

cultured classes, who could appreciate the restraint and artistry of his efforts. The Spanish people did not properly understand his works, for his methods were strange and foreign to them. They were really unfair critics in the case of Moratín, for they were so biassed in their ideas as to believe that no good comedy could come from the pen of a neo-classic dramatist. Moratín founded no school in his lifetime, but he was the forerunner of many fine writers of the nineteenth century. Indeed it would appear that the importance of his influence as a pioneer has not yet been fully gauged, for it has been felt continually during the hundred years that have elapsed since his death. We agree that he lacked depth of thought and feeling and that he fell short of greatness. Yet it was Leandro de Moratín who first successfully restrained and curbed the melodramatic exaggerations, the inaccuracies and the waywardness of Spanish dramatic genius, imposing on it rules of good taste and good sense, while still making it possible for authors to preserve much of their national inspiration.

The period of neo-classic domination was now drawing to a close, and we become aware of the fact that new forces

were at work. The hundred odd years of French influence have left their mark on the national Spanish drama. One point, which is worth observing in connection with this, is that some Spanish writers of note depreciate the value of French influence in the eighteenth century and hint that Spanish literature would have been better if it had developed unaided. Unamuno is particularly bitter and condemns severely both French classical literature and Spanish literature imitative of French. He says, "Los vicios literarios y artísticos de ese pueblo (francés) "terriblemente lógico, desesperadamente geométrico, "cartesiano",⁽¹⁾ and again, "Nada más insoportable que la "literatura española afrancesada: nada más falso y más "vano y mas desagradable que los escritores españoles "formados en la imitación de la literatura francesa."⁽²⁾ These statements are surely rather sweeping and unfair, for it is generally admitted that this neo-classic school did much in the way of sane criticism, which was badly needed at the time. It restrained and purified and tried

(1) Ensayos de Miguel de Unamuno. (Madrid 1918) Vol.VII.
(sobre la Europeización) p.180.

(2) Do. Do. Do. p.181.

to cure many of the serious faults of the decadent national dramatists of the day. Most certainly it succeeded in bringing common-sense into the Spanish theatre and thus banished many of the wayward practices that had made their appearance in dramatic works. Yet the spirit of the national Spanish drama did not disappear during those years but some trace of it was to be found in most of the dramatic works of the century - at least in all of those which had any real value.

P A R T 1.

CHAPTER II.

EARLY ROMANTICISM (NEO-NATIONALISM)
(1808-1834).

The arrival of Romanticism in Spain was belated and its sojourn brief. Although the new movement was foreshadowed earlier, the year 1834 saw the presentation of two of the dramas of the new type and marked, as it were, the commencement of productivity. By this date the Romantic drama was already triumphant in the rest of Europe, and one wonders why its appearance in Spain was so much delayed. The political situation was mainly responsible. During the last years of the eighteenth century, the Spanish nation appeared to be peacefully contented with its lot and quite oblivious of the important political and social changes which were taking place beyond the Pyrenees. There the Revolution of 1789 was carried through, and the French people gained their freedom. But Spain slept on until after the beginning of the nineteenth century, when she was rudely awakened and

had to fight for her independence, even for her very life, against the foreign invader. Unsuspected reserves of strength and resistance revealed themselves, and owing to united action and patriotic feeling, Spain's efforts were crowned with success. During those years of stress (1808-1814), influences were at work inside the country, and, as often happens under such conditions, Spain emerged from the conflict a different nation. Modern conceptions of progress were formed, social ideas changed, the influence of the bourgeoisie increased and theories of liberalism became popular. It looked as if 1814 was to be the first year of an era of Spanish constitutional government, the beginning of freedom and progress.

But this was not what happened. Ferdinand VII. returned to his throne in 1814 amidst great rejoicings and great hopes, especially on the part of the young, enlightened spirits in the country. Unfortunately, however, for Spain, the monarch had very different ideas with regard to government, and instead of ruling according to a constitutional Parliamentary system, as had been hoped, he re-established absolutism in the country

and took the reins of government into his own hands. There was no freedom in politics or any other sphere; on all sides there was harsh suppression and restriction. An extremely severe censorship was established, and thus no advance in literature could be made. No quarter was given to those persons who did not submit to this cruel tyranny, and many had to pay the penalty for conspiring against the ruling power. The rebels were killed, imprisoned or exiled. Many of the prominent men of the day were banished because of their convictions and spent years abroad. At one period it was estimated that the number of 'emigrados' amounted to forty thousand souls. Spain had to go through with her trial to the bitter end, but in 1833 Ferdinand died. His successor Isabel II. considered it a wise policy to agree to liberal, constitutional ideas of government, and thus, after her many years of waiting, Spain was free and "en literatura, lo mismo que en política, in-"auguróse instantáneamente un nuevo regimen, una nueva "existencia". (1)

(1) El Romanticismo en España. E. Piñeyro. (Paris 1904) p.IX.

This Romanticism which made its appearance in Spain, had a twofold aspect. It owed a great deal to the influence of contemporary foreign Romanticism, which by the year 1833, the date of the emancipation of Spanish literature, was well established in Europe, especially in Germany, France and England. The other aspect of the movement was perhaps even more important. Romanticism in Spain also represented the revival of the free, national spirit of Spanish literature, which had been subdued to a certain extent during the eighteenth century but which had never disappeared completely. It is very difficult in the study of this period to separate those two aspects of the movement or to say which influence it was that acted on the individual writers, for the Spanish 'Siglo de Oro' drama inspired, to a certain extent, European nineteenth Century Romanticism. Because of this and also because of the inherent resemblances in the Romantic movements of any age, there are many elements which are common to both aspects.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, a wave of Romanticism swept over the literatures of Europe.

England with her school of Romantic poets was well in the front of this movement, and certain of her authors exerted a great influence on Spanish literature. These were Southey, Macpherson, Scott and Byron. In Germany we have such important names as Herder, Goethe, Schiller and the brothers Schlegel. The new literary doctrines were likewise strongly supported in France by, among other writers, Chateaubriand, Vigny, Hugo and Dumas (père). Thus Spain had near her countries whose literatures were Romantic both in thought and form, although each nation tended to emphasise its own individual idea of the movement. These new literary theories were not allowed free entrance into Spain during the reign of Ferdinand and, if any were successful in crossing the frontier, they were immediately suppressed. Authors had to conform, outwardly at least, to the strict censorship which was in force at that time, or to pay the penalty for their indiscretion in rebelling against the absolutism of the monarch by going into exile. Many of the most talented young men of the day were banished to France, Germany or England. They spent years away from Spain, living among exponents of the new literary movement.

and being saturated with the Romantic literature of the countries in which they dwelt. It was obviously only a matter of time until Spain joined the ranks of the other nations, and she waited impatiently for the day when she would be free. The literary men at home chafed at the bonds which confined them. Those abroad revelled in the new spirit of literature, which had been revealed to them in exile, and turned their eyes towards Spain, longing for the day when they would be allowed to return.

In Spain, however, the nineteenth century Romantic movement was largely a revival of the spirit of the 'Siglo de Oro'. Neo-classic ideas had never been really deeply rooted, nor had they appealed to the Spanish people as a whole. It was no difficult matter, therefore, to cast aside the restrictions imposed by the eighteenth century and to restore much of the old spirit of Spanish dramatic art, which had never wholly disappeared. "Lo que podía parecer entre nosotros importación exótica era más bien restauración castiza en frente del servilismo reinante."⁽¹⁾ If the eighteenth century was

(1) La Literatura Española en el Siglo XIX. Blanco García. (Madrid 1909) Vol.I., p.77.

called the neo-classic period, the first half of the nineteenth might be named the "neo-national" age. In Spain attention was directed back towards the great works of the seventeenth century dramatists. Most of the nineteenth century authors knew those 'Siglo de Oro' masterpieces and studied them carefully, especially from the point of view of literary style and versification. Calderón, in particular, was praised as never before and reached a pinnacle of fame perhaps undeserved, for he did not surpass the other dramatists of the seventeenth century to such an extent. German literature was largely responsible for this, and Schlegel⁽¹⁾ in particular tried to make the Spaniards realise their good fortune in falling heir to such a wonderful inheritance as the 'Siglo de Oro' dramatic works. He also pointed to Calderón as the great master of the drama. This was the beginning of the swing of the pendulum in favour of Calderón, and it has never returned to its normal position. Since then Lope's value has been depressed at the expense of Calderón's. The genius of the 'Siglo

(1) The elder of the brothers, Augusto Guillermo Schlegel (1767 - 1845).

de Oro' was thus restored to its proper place, and its prestige was openly re-established. Spanish dramatists of the nineteenth century considered it a privilege to try to reproduce the spirit and versification of their own old national dramatists.

Another point of interest with regard to sixteenth and seventeenth century Spanish literature is that it undoubtedly served as an inspiration to the Romantic movement abroad. With regard to its contribution to French literature of the time, it has been remarked that, "Elle (Spain) nous offrait son romancero, qui "faisait voir un moyen âge héroïque et parfois féroce, "ardemment ou durement chrétien, pittoresque et familier "dans le sublime et l'extraordinaire."⁽¹⁾ Spain's influence was felt in English⁽²⁾ Romantic literature and in German⁽³⁾ literature also. We may take it, therefore, that certain of the characteristics embodied in

(1) Histoire de la Littérature Française. Gustave Lanson. (Paris 1916) p.934.

(2) Scott and Southey, but particularly in some of the works of the latter who had a better understanding of Spain and her literature than any other English writer of his day.

(3) Schlegel and Tieck.

European Romanticism of the nineteenth century were partly inspired by the free, spontaneous nature of old Spanish literature. "Después de adoptar Francia el "romanticismo y popularizarlo, vuelve a España de donde "había brotado."⁽¹⁾ So says one enthusiast, but perhaps this is putting the case rather strongly.

Romanticism in dramatic literature is extremely difficult to define, for its characteristics vary in different countries and even in different writers of the same nation. In Spain particularly we notice that each dramatist appears to exhibit some special quality or qualities of the movement, one showing freedom in treatment of the plot, another perhaps freedom and beauty of versification. The essential aspect of the Romantic movement is the throwing aside of restraint and the breaking away from all the bonds and conventions of eighteenth century Neo-classicism. The subjects of the dramas change. They are now taken either from medieval national history or from 'Siglo de Oro comedias'. The atmosphere is decidedly Spanish, and the inspiration is

(1) El Romanticismo en España. Honora Aherne. (Cork 1932) p.8.

chivalric and christian. There is much local colour, and there are few references of any kind to the classics or to classical mythology. The bonds of the Three Unities are continually and deliberately broken.

No longer are logic and reason used to repress the individuality, but passion, imagination and personality have free expression. There is no trace of any didactic note in the dramas of Romanticism; instead, the emotions, sentiment and fancy are guides and inspirations. In place of the cool aloofness of Neo-classicism we have the personal element which gives life and fire, colour and excitement to Romantic productions; and that is what the public of that period desired. Another departure from the ideas of Neo-classicism is the introduction of a great deal of action in the plot. Movement is considered to be the essential in Romantic drama, just as it had been in the 'Siglo de Oro comedia'. In the nineteenth century productions we find action in abundance, murders and suicides, hairbreadth escapes and amazing coincidences, and all sorts of intrigues to thrill the members of the audience. Neither is there any lack of sentiment to touch their hearts. The settings of

the dramas are often showy, and there is much display of grandeur which may attract the eye, but the characterisation is generally poor. With regard to form, complete freedom is allowed. No longer is the work polished and repolished, but it is now free and natural in style. Thus we have Romantic dramas written partly in prose and partly in verse, the appropriate type of expression being chosen for each particular scene. Great variety and beauty in versification and also exquisite lyrical qualities are present in many of the productions. Most of the metrical forms used are national and traditional in origin. The vocabulary is rich, colourful and unrestricted, a suitable one to express the thoughts of the characters in such dramas. Even in this general survey of the characteristics of Romanticism, it occurs to one that there may be rather much freedom in this new movement and that this liberty may on occasion be abused. However, in the meantime, we content ourselves with appreciating the desires that prompted the pioneers of Romanticism to escape from neo-classic restraints and we eagerly welcome the new drama with its liberty and its refreshing spontaneity.

There were early traces of the awakening of a Romantic spirit in Spanish literature. Even in the eighteenth century with Cadalso⁽¹⁾ some of these qualities may be seen. As early as 1803 there appeared a Spanish version of Chateaubriand's Atala and in 1816 there was a translation of St. Pierre's Paul et Virginie. Later there were other translations of Romantic writers, particularly from the French, and though these were not of great literary value, they must all have helped to spread Romantic ideas. Gradually those theories began to be more widely known. 'Tertulias' were held where the new literary ideas were discussed. Articles appeared in newspapers, and in Barcelona in 1823 'El Europeo' was founded to explain Romantic theories as they were expounded abroad. Böhl de Faber, a German by birth, came and settled in Cadiz in 1790. Later, especially during the reign of Ferdinand VII., he interested himself greatly in the furthering of the cause of Romanticism, publishing articles condemning neo-classic rules

(1) José Cadalso (1741 - 1782).

and thereby becoming involved in a bitter quarrel with Mora, the champion of the Neo-classicists. Many 'tertulias' were held at Faber's home. It is said also that he was the person responsible for presenting in Cadiz several comedies of Calderón which were well received. All this was being done during the reign of the tyrant Ferdinand and despite the restraint and censorship which were prevalent at the time. Although many of the leading literary men were in exile, there still remained some enthusiasts in the country and they were working quietly for the cause of Romanticism. In 1831 they formed in Madrid a club 'El Parnasillo' for the discussion of literary theories. The triumph of Romanticism was inevitable and was achieved in 1833 on the death of Ferdinand. The 'emigrados' returned and joined forces with the supporters of Romanticism, who had remained in Spain. There was no great struggle between Neo-classicism and Romanticism. As might have been expected in Spain, the former simply disappeared. At last then Romanticism came into its own in Spain, and in 1834 there was the beginning of the Romantic productions in the drama.

April 1834 was the date of the presentation of the first Romantic drama. This was called La Conjuración de Venecia and was written by Martínez de la Rosa.⁽¹⁾ In his youth La Rosa wrote Moratinian comedies or classical tragedies, of which La Viuda de Padilla, produced in 1814, was outstanding. Like many others, this author was exiled because of his liberal ideas in politics and spent eight years⁽²⁾ in Paris, where he came under the spell of Chateaubriand and Hugo. While there he became a Romantic and even wrote a play in French, Aben-Humeya, which was acclaimed in Paris in 1830. On the termination of his exile, he returned home and not very long after his return produced the drama which made such an impression throughout the country. Later his French play was given in Spanish, but was received with only mild enthusiasm. It is generally admitted that Martínez de la Rosa's main contribution to literature lay in this first Romantic drama, and it is for this that he is now remembered.

(1) Francisco Martínez de la Rosa (1787 - 1862).

(2) 1823 - 1831.

La Conjuración de Venecia (April 1834) is a historic drama with both tragic and comic elements. It deals with the famous attempt in 1310 to overthrow the Council of Ten. In addition there is a very strong love interest. In uniting the account of the political conspiracy with the love story, M. de la Rosa has shown particular skill. The drama is written in prose which is in keeping with the elevated spirit of the piece. Throughout the work there is passion and real depth of feeling, much more so than in some of the author's other works. "Hay en esta obra más que en "ninguna otra suya, calor de afectos y aliento de pasión "verdadera, grande interés y hábil artificio, habiendo "evitado el autor las pálidas tintas que se ven en otras "obras suyas." (1)

La Rosa was a supporter of the Romantic school and a pioneer of the movement, without being a very strong factor in its development. When in Paris he became a Romantic, and he did so very easily and rather superficially. It was characteristic of him to respond

(1) Historia de la Literatura Española. Hurtado y Palencia. (Madrid 1921) p.895.

quickly to any atmosphere in which he happened to find himself, and being in Paris at that time, he naturally was carried away (as far as his temperament allowed him) by the Romantic theories. But Martínez de la Rosa was timid and afraid of the new theories. He could only go a certain distance along this unknown road. He had not enough boldness or decision to be of much value as a pioneer, and it was not his destiny to be the leader of the Romantic movement, which position he might have held if he had been endowed with sufficient strength of character. He had a chance to accomplish splendid things and failed to grasp his opportunities. "Éste, al fin y al cabo, fué destino constante de Martínez de la Rosa, así en política como en literatura, ser heraldo de revoluciones y asustarse luego de ellas y de la misma manera, en el arte, sin haber sido nunca romántico (sic), abrir la puerta al Romanticismo y triunfar el primero en las tablas, en nombre de la nueva escuela."

(1) Autores dramáticos contemporáneos del Siglo XIX.
 (Madrid 1882) Article by Menéndez y Pelayo.
 Vol.II., p.15.

Five months after La Conjuración de Venecia, the next Romantic production appeared. This was Macías, written by Larra⁽¹⁾, an author who might have been one of the great forces in Romanticism but who committed suicide at the age of twenty-eight. His fame rests mainly on his journalistic and critical works, which contain interesting criticisms of contemporary literature. With regard to his contribution to Romantic drama, his Macías (Sept. 1834) is worthy of note. The subject of the play is the same as that of his novel, El Doncel de Don Enrique el Doliente; indeed the drama is like a dramatised novel with a complicated plot and numerous, rather unimportant, uninteresting incidents. The verse form of the work, although careless in parts, shows real depth of feeling and forceful energy of expression. Macías was romantic in subject, spirit and form but only moderately so. Larra gave of his best, but he was no dramatic genius, and, although by the production of his play he supported Martínez de la Rosa, almost everything yet remained to be done. By these

(1) Mariano José de Larra (1809 - 1837).

two productions of the year 1834, Romanticism was launched; but the public was still awaiting the masterpiece which, illustrating the theories of the new school and embodying its spirit, would bring real success to the movement.

P A R T 2.

CHAPTER I.ROMANTICISM (NEO-NATIONALISM)(1835-1850).

The play which was to bring definite triumph to the cause of Romanticism in Spain was written by Rivas⁽¹⁾. He was a man of strong personality and attractive character, well fitted to play an important part in the Romantic dramatic movement. He was bold enough to produce a piece which, completing the work of Martínez de la Rosa and Larra, represented the overthrow of classic rules and the final, unchallenged triumph of Romanticism.

In his earlier works Rivas did not show signs of remarkable dramatic talent. He wrote several classical tragedies⁽²⁾, none of which was outstanding. Being involved in political disturbances in 1823, Rivas found it

(1) Ángel de Saavedra, later Duque de Rivas (1791 - 1865).

(2) E.g. Ataulfo (1814). Doña Blanca (1815). Aliatar (1816). Lanuza (1822).

necessary to leave Spain and to spend many years away from his native country. He visited Gibraltar, England, Malta and France in the course of his wanderings, and his literary ideas changed greatly during his periods of residence in those countries. He studied closely certain of the Romantic writers with whose works he came in contact in his years of exile. In English literature, Shakespeare, Scott and Byron were the authors who probably influenced him most. Furthermore, it was during this period that his attention was directed to the glorious works of the old Spanish masters, and he first fully appreciated the splendid literary traditions which lay in the past. In France he was greatly influenced by the Romantic school and particularly by the production⁽¹⁾ of the epoch-making Hernani, which took place in Paris just a few weeks before his arrival⁽²⁾ in France. With the inspiration of the French play in his mind and in the hope that he might present a masterpiece which would have a similar effect on the Spanish theatre, Rivas wrote a

(1) 25th February, 1830.

(2) Rivas arrived at Marseilles from Malta 23rd or 24th March, 1830.

drama in prose before he returned to Spain in 1834. It was translated into French by his friend Galiano. Later it was recast in prose and poetry by the author and presented in Madrid on the evening of March 22, 1835. This was an extremely important date in the evolution of the Spanish drama, as it was with the production of Don Álvaro that the Romantic theatre in Spain really came into its own. There was not the same discussion about this play as there had been in France in the case of Hernani, for Spain was ready to welcome such a work. Besides, although Rivas' production "may be regarded as a sort of bill-of-rights of 'the romantic school',⁽¹⁾ yet many of its characteristics were by no means new to Spain. At first, Don Álvaro amazed and horrified but later came to delight the public, who, while realising that this strange work was inspired to a certain extent by the new foreign Romantic school, rejoiced to see the reappearance of so many of the fine qualities of their beloved 'Siglo de Oro comedia'.

(1) A Short History of Spain. H. Dwight Sedgwick.
(New York 1925) p.307.

A few months after his return to Spain in 1834, Ángel de Saavedra, as he then was, became Duque de Rivas owing to the death of his brother. This change of fortune had a marked effect on the literary activities of the author, for through the new interests that came to him, largely political and diplomatic, he had little leisure to devote to the writing of drama. Nothing need be said of the plays⁽¹⁾ subsequent to Don Álvaro with the exception of El Desengaño en un Sueño. This work was written in 1842 but not presented in Madrid until 1875, as no suitable actor could be found to play the part of the hero. The play was philosophical in character and resembled Calderón's La Vida es Sueño in many ways. It was beautiful and heroic in conception, and artistic in execution, but it lacked something of the freshness and spontaneity which were present in Don Álvaro, Rivas' masterpiece.

This revolutionary play may be considered as the first whole-heartedly Romantic work in the drama of nineteenth century Spain. It was as if Rivas

(1) Solaces de un Prisionero (1840). La Morisca de Alahuar (1841). El Crisol de la Lealtad (1842). El Parador de Bailén (1842).

deliberately set out to go against every neo-classic convention and to write a play which would illustrate the theories of the new Romanticism and vindicate its rights. One critic says, "Es indudable que el Duque "quiso adoptar y aun extremar la moda de lo romántico "al escribir el Don Álvaro."⁽¹⁾ The drama in question is the antithesis of the conventional neo-classic comedy. There are twenty-six actors who make their appearance on the stage, without counting the numerous soldiers, villagers and others who play small parts. This is a decided contrast to neo-classic works, where the caste was always reduced to a minimum. Then, the characters represented are taken from all classes of the community, from the lowest to the highest. We see before us nobles, monks, soldiers, innkeepers, servants, a water carrier, a gipsy girl - all figures typical of ordinary Spanish life, as well as of the aristocracy. The drama contains five acts or 'jornadas', each divided into a large number of scenes, making a total of forty-four scenes in all. There are as many as fifteen settings⁽²⁾ in the course

(1) Obras Completas. Juan Valera. Vol.XXVII., p.176.

(2) Act I. 2 settings: Act II. 2 settings. Act III. 4 settings: Act IV. 3 settings. Act V. 4 settings.

of the production. All this is a departure from the standard of simplicity set up by the writers of neo-classic comedy.

Rivas here disregards the Unities in so far as it suits him to do so. The Unity of Action is observed, as the whole story centres upon the hero and his misfortunes. The Unity of Place is completely ignored, for the first act takes place in Seville, the second near Cordova, the third and fourth in Italy and the last again near Cordova. No attention is paid either to the Unity of Time by Rivas, who allows one year⁽¹⁾ to elapse between the first and second acts, forty days⁽²⁾ between the third and fourth acts and a period of four years⁽³⁾ between the last two. Rivas sets these neo-classic rules at naught and writes exactly as he wishes.

In this drama there is the usual mixture of laughter and tears, comedy and tragedy, which was characteristic of the national Spanish 'comedia'. Although at times

(1) Act II. Scene 3, l. 325.

(2) Act IV. Scene 1, l. 1.

(3) Act V. Scene 2, l. 143.

the main theme reaches lofty heights, there are several amusing scenes which are popular in their inspiration. The author revels in his liberty and lets his fervour, imagination and inspiration have free play. There is no lack of fantasy or sentiment, and the dramatic situations of Romanticism are fully exploited. The piece begins on a light note, which continues until the eighth scene, where we have a sudden dramatic change to tragedy in the accidental killing of the Marquis of Calatrava by Don Álvaro. The whole of this incident is treated in approved Romantic fashion, and the last words of the dying Marquis "Yo te maldigo"⁽¹⁾ are in the same vein. From this point onwards, the main character is swept along on a stream of passion. Interest is held right up to the end of the drama where there is a terrible but not illogical dénouement with a whole orgy of slaughter.⁽²⁾ The last three scenes of Don Álvaro rise to a height of frenzy which shows us Romanticism in its most extreme form. The drama portrays love, hatred, the idea of honour and an insatiable desire for vengeance. The

(1) Act I. Scene 8, l. 664.

(2) A duel, a murder, and a suicide.

birth of the hero is a mystery almost to the end of the work, when Don Alfonso⁽¹⁾ reveals the noble origin of Don Álvaro before the duel between himself and his much sought after enemy. Rivas occasionally before this point gives us hints as to the nobility of the hero's antecedents. Don Álvaro himself talks of "mi "estirpe soberana"⁽²⁾, and addressing Don Carlos before the duel says,

"si halla en su contrario um hombre
"de nobleza y pundonor." ⁽³⁾

There are other references⁽⁴⁾ to the same matter, but light is not shed on the subject until the conclusion, when it seems almost too late, for by that time we have lost interest in this part of the story. The spontaneity and effortlessness of the work are wonderful. Its Romantic fervour and fire make it compare very favourably with the uninspired, laborious products of the preceding century. Don Álvaro has its faults, but we must

(1) Act V. Scene 9, ll. 502-560.

(2) Act I. Scene 7, l. 525.

(3) Act IV. Scene 1, l. 135.

(4) Act I. Scene 2, ll. 140-145. Act III. Scene 3, ll. 134-143.

appreciate to the full, its imagination, inspiration, rich variety, and passionate life.

In this tragic drama there are in evidence all the tricks of the trade of Romanticism. The moon⁽¹⁾ adds to the beauty of the scene, darkness⁽²⁾ falls to give the impression of mystery, the thunder and lightning⁽³⁾ make their appearance to intensify the horror and tragedy of the end. The organ⁽⁴⁾ is heard playing and the monastery bells⁽⁵⁾ ring. Don Álvaro, wrapped in a silken cloak, "cruza lentamente la escena mirando con dignidad "y melancolía a todos lados"⁽⁶⁾. In the last act of the play, Don Alfonso can neither persuade nor provoke Don Álvaro to fight with him and finally "le da una bofetada"⁽⁷⁾, which brings about the desired duel. Then comes the

(1) Act I. Scene 5, and Act II. Scene 3.

(2) Act I. Scene 3.

(3) Act V. Scenes 9 and 11.

(4) Act II. Scene 3.

(5) Act V. Scene 10.

(6) Act I. Scene 3.

(7) Act V. Scene 6, l. 405.

climax when the hero "Desde un risco, con sonrisa
 "diabólica, todo convulso, dice: Yo soy un enviado
 "del infierno, soy el demonio exterminador.... Huid,
 "miserables: Infierno, abre tu boca y trágame.
 "Húndase el cielo, perezca la raza humana; exterminio,
 "destrucción"⁽¹⁾ and hurls himself to death, while the
 monks chant "¡Misericordia, Señor! ¡Misericordia!"

Several resemblances exist between the Spanish
 work and Hernani, Victor Hugo's drama. Of course, some
 of these are due to the fact that Hernani was Spanish in
 subject. The Spanish conception of honour is very much
 to the forefront in both dramas. Indeed, each play is
 really based to a large extent on this idea, and neither
 could have existed without it. There is also a resemb-
 lance in the plans made by the hero to elope with his
 loved one. They both choose midnight⁽²⁾, but that is
 the time one would expect a Romantic dramatist to select,
 and this is probably only coincidence. Then, also,
 neither elopement is successfully carried out according

(1) Act V. Scene 2, l. 672.

(2) Don Álvaro. Act I. Scene 6, l. 466.
 Hernani. Act I. Scene 2, l. 163.

to plan. Another similarity is that *Hernani*, like *Don Álvaro*, appears to be of humble origin but is really of noble birth. He says to Doña Sol, "Il faut que vous "sachiez quel nom, quel rang, quelle âme, quel destin est "caché dans le pâtre *Hernani*. Vous vouliez d'un brigand, voulez-vous d'un banni?"⁽¹⁾ No opportunity is given at this point for the revelation of the true identity of the hero, but *Hernani* himself, having deliberately concealed the secret, reveals it in the second last act⁽²⁾ of the drama. There is also a certain similarity of form, as shown in the long soliloquies occurring in both works, the monotony of which is broken at intervals by some movement or incident. The best example in *Hernani* is the long soliloquy comprising the whole of one scene⁽³⁾, when the hero communes with the spirit of Charlemagne, while in *Don Álvaro*, there are three important ones, that of Doña Leonor outside 'el Convento de los Ángeles'⁽⁴⁾, that of Don Álvaro who seeks death which flees from him⁽⁵⁾, and that of Don

(1) *Hernani*. Act I. Scene 2, l. 168.

(2) Do. Act IV. Scene 4, ll. 423-433.

(3) Do. Act IV. Scene 2.

(4) *Don Álvaro*. Act II. Scene 5.

(5) Do. Act III. Scene 3.

Carlos at the end of the third act⁽¹⁾. In the French drama we find also a large number⁽²⁾ of characters, five acts and twenty-six scenes, but fewer changes of setting than in Don Álvaro. Hugo, likewise, uses all the stock-in-trade of the Romantic drama, impressive scenery⁽³⁾ and emphatic, exclamatory style.

Although we admit that Don Álvaro was influenced by French Romanticism, there was much in the work which was purely Spanish and made special appeal to Spanish audiences. It was impregnated with 'españolismo'. As Azorín says, "En el Don Álvaro alienta el mismo espíritu que en el Quijote. El genio castellano - idealidad y práctica - "se exterioriza en esa obra espléndidamente".⁽⁴⁾ The whole spirit and atmosphere of the drama are essentially Spanish. The origins of its plot are rather obscure, there being resemblances between it and that of other plays, such as La Verdad Sospechosa and El Burlador de

(1) Don Álvaro. Act III. Scene 8.

(2) Nineteen characters.

(3) E.g. Hernani. Act IV. (Charlemagne's tomb).

(4) Lecturas Españolas. Azorín. (Madrid 1912) p.21.

Sevilla. Probably Don Álvaro was also based partly on legend, especially on La Mujer Penitente⁽¹⁾ which explains the idea of Leonor taking refuge⁽²⁾ in El Convento de los Ángeles. There is also great similarity between that part of the action where the hero kills his beloved's father and later her brother, and part of the plot of the novel Les Âmes du Purgatoire⁽³⁾ by Mérimée. It appears an almost insoluble problem to decide which author conceived the idea originally. Boussagol tends to think that Mérimée borrowed from Rivas. He says, "J'avoue que "des trois hypothèses à envisager: absence d'emprunts de "part et d'autre, emprunts de Rivas a Mérimée, emprunts de "Mérimée a Rivas, c'est la dernière qui me séduit le plus".⁽⁴⁾

But, after all, it matters little whether this idea in the Spanish work was original or not, for it has been utilised with such skill and effect that the question of originality loses all importance.

(1) A legend which was well known in the South of Spain.

(2) Act II. Scene 7.

(3) Published 15th August, 1834.

(4) Ángel de Saavedra. Boussagol. (Toulouse 1926)
p.280.

Some of the best scenes in the drama are the popular ones⁽¹⁾ at the beginning of the first and second acts, and these contain much realism and local colour. The first picture represents a spot at the entrance to the old Triana bridge in Seville, where the famous mineral water from Tomares is sold. Here are gathered together various types of Spaniards, who chat gaily while drinking the waters. We meet the dandy, the canon, the townsman, the officer and the gipsy girl Preciosilla⁽²⁾, all talking and behaving as in life. In addition to providing entertainment, this part serves as a natural introduction, in which we hear conversation throwing light on the plot and several of the characters. At the beginning of the second act the scene is laid in the kitchen of an inn at Hornachuelos near Cordova. It is the evening of a religious festival,⁽³⁾ and all the inns in the village are full. There are many different types of Spaniards presented to us, and they are

(1) Act I. Scenes 1-4. Act II. Scenes 1 and 2.

(2) This character reminds us of Preciosilla, the gipsy girl in "La Gitanilla" by Cervantes.

(3) Act II. Scene 1, l. 94.

all naturally and realistically portrayed. The spirit of gaiety is abroad. A student plays the guitar and sings, some villagers dance, the mayor and the innkeeper sit gravely beside the fire, while the latter's wife is busily engaged cooking a meal. This is served, and all crowd round the table while a bright, witty flow of conversation goes on. Incidentally we are being informed in this scene of events of which we should be made aware, and especially of the presence in the inn of a young stranger, who turns out to be Leonor. These realistic, popular parts form a great contrast to the rest of the drama and give welcome relief from the tense atmosphere to be found elsewhere. They are interesting and natural and compare very favourably with the later scenes⁽¹⁾, which are set in Italy. Everything here is truly Spanish, and Rivas shows an intimate knowledge of Andalusia, of all classes of her people, their customs and their conversation. Cueto in his contemporary criticism of Don Álvaro appreciates and emphasises this point. He says, "Si pareciere a alguno que las (= particularidades) elogiamos

(1) Acts III. and IV.

(4) Act V. Scene 1.

"con sobrada vehemencia, sepa éste que escribimos desde
 "Sevilla, y que, siempre que bebemos a la entrada del
 "puente de Triana el agua de Tomares, siempre que
 "entramos en algún mesón andaluz, vemos representar por
 "los actores de la naturaleza una parte de Don Álvaro."⁽¹⁾

Mention must also be made, in passing, of the humorous character of El Hermano Melitón, the doorkeeper of El Convento de los Ángeles, who is the possessor of an ever-ready tongue. He appears first of all in the second act⁽²⁾ and amuses us with his wit and his inquisitiveness. Unwilling to miss the conversation which will reveal the secret of the mystery of the midnight visitor to the monastery, he hovers around on the pretext that "Está tan premiosa esta puerta",⁽³⁾ and on being summarily dismissed, he shuts the door muttering. At the beginning⁽⁴⁾ of the fifth act we again have the good fortune to meet this amusing character, dishing out soup to the poor and losing

(1) Examen de Don Álvaro. Cueto, Marqués de Valmar.
 (El Artista 1835) - Reprinted in Bulletin of
 Spanish Studies. Jan. 1930. Vol.VII, No.25, p.5.

(2) Act II. Scene 4.

(3) Act II. Scene 6, l. 447.

(4) Act V. Scene 1.

all patience with them. "No hay paciencia que baste"⁽¹⁾, are the words of apology he uses when speaking to El Padre Guardián. The monk rebukes the unruly ones sharply and indulges in much witty Spanish repartee at their expense. These scenes are characteristically national and help to give a Spanish flavour to the drama.

Don Álvaro is written in prose and verse. It is all to the good that Rivas decided to give his drama poetical form, because, by doing so, he made his work much more Spanish and also lifted it to a higher level than it would otherwise have reached. The popular, realistic scenes appear in prose and this is exactly as it should be. In some of the other parts of the drama, however, it seems as if the author has not always been wise in the choice of his medium of expression. Near the end of the first act there is a sudden change over from verse to prose in the middle of a scene⁽²⁾. This is probably done for effect, but surely verse would have been more appropriate in a passage which describes the sudden arrival of the Marquis of Calatrava, the quarrel between

(1) Act V. Scene 2, l. 77.

(2) Act I. Scene 7.

him and Don Álvaro and the accidental killing of Leonor's father. The prose is inadequate, and Rivas has recourse to an artificial style full of interjections and exclamations.

Leonor: "¡Qué horror! ¡Don Álvaro!

Marqués: "¡Vil seductor...! ¡Hija infame!

Leonor: "¡Padre!!! ¡Padre!!!" (1)

These lines show the weakness of the prose and the artificial straining after effect. Another example occurs later in the same scene.

Marqués: "Muerto soy... ¡Ay de mí!

Don Álvaro: "¡Dios mío! ¡Arma funesta! ¡Noche terrible!

Leonor: "¡Padre, Padre!" (2)

It is a curious fact that the tragic end of this drama should be written in prose, when verse would have added so much to the dignity and awesomeness of the climax. Rivas changes from verse in the eighth scene of the fifth act, and he continues in prose to the finale of the piece.

(1) Act I. Scene 7, ll. 616-618.

(2) Act I. Scene 8, l. 656.

Here again we feel that the author is making every effort to achieve effect, but in the end his short clipped phrases become monotonous and ridiculous.

Padre Guardián: "¡Dios mío...! ¡Sangre derramada!
¡Cadáveres...! ¡La mujer
penitente!

Todos los Frailes: "¡Una mujer! ¡Cielos!

Padre Guardián: "¡Padre Rafael!" (1)

The verse is artistic and harmonious. Many varieties of versification have been successfully used, 'romance', 'redondillas', 'quintillas', 'silva', and 'romance real'. The diction is pure, and the vocabulary is wholly Spanish. Rivas' dialogue is animated and varied with passages of great passion and sublimity leading to others of natural ease and familiarity. There are long⁽²⁾ soliloquies, which, while corresponding to those in the dramas of the French Romantics, are very reminiscent of those of Calderón's works. Some of the lyrical parts are especially beautiful, and their harmony makes them linger in our memory. We cannot fail to appreciate the artistry of

(1) Act V. Scene 11, l. 668.

(2) Act II. Scene 3 (Leonor). Act III. Scene 3 (Don Alvaro). Act III. Scene 8 (Don Carlos).

phrase and rhyme achieved by Rivas, who was as successful with his pen as with his brush.

"El que tranquilo, gozoso
 "Vive entre aplausos y honores,
 "Y de inocentes amores
 "Apura el cáliz sabroso,
 "Cuando es más fuerte y brioso,
 "La muerte sus dichas huella,
 "Sus venturas atropella;
 "Y yo que infelice soy,
 "Yo que buscándola voy,
 "No puedo encontrar con ella." (1)

These lines and many others impress by their richness and by their passionate, melancholy beauty.

Nevertheless there are obvious faults in this drama, such as melodramatic exaggeration and inequality. We find parts that on analysis may almost be termed ridiculous. The characterisation is poor, only the figure of the hero himself being strong and well defined. The other characters are only faintly sketched and make little impression. The piece must have been extremely difficult to present with its fifteen settings; and, for all their beauty, the long speeches made on different occasions by some of the characters must have wearied at least a few of the spectators. There are many

(1) Act III. Scene 3, ll. 114-123.

inequalities in the style of the drama. Although Rivas generally hits on the right word and the correct turn of phrase, there are, however, passages which would have been improved by a little additional care. But even while recognising the weaknesses of the drama, we must admit that it reaches a sublimity never attained in the Spanish theatre since the seventeenth century. It imports the ideas of foreign Romanticism, being particularly indebted to the influence of French dramatic writers. At the same time it is a very national production and embodies many of the splendid qualities of the 'Siglo de Oro comedia', having its full share of the passion and inspiration so characteristic of Spanish genius through the ages.

Just as the year 1835 was outstanding for the performance of Don Álvaro, so 1836 was important for the presentation of another great Romantic drama. This was El Trovador, which was written by Gutiérrez⁽¹⁾, an author whose gifts were particularly suitable for dramatic composition and whose passion was to write for the theatre.

(1) Antonio García Gutiérrez (1813 - 1884).

Even before the appearance of his first great play he had decided that his vocation was drama, and he had done several⁽¹⁾ translations from Scribe. On trying original work he found it impossible to have his first play presented, and, much depressed and in great financial straits, he decided to enlist in the army. Finally through the good offices of an influential friend⁽²⁾, the work was played on the 1st March, 1836, amidst scenes of great enthusiasm. The young soldier broke barracks on that eventful night, and after the performance he had to appear on the stage, in a borrowed coat, to answer the plaudits of the audience which was clamouring for the author. This was the real beginning of the custom in Spain of demanding the presence of the successful dramatist on the stage at the end of a performance. Thus, in a single night, Gutiérrez rose to fame. As Larra says, "El autor del Trovador se ha presentado en la arena nuevo lidiador, sin títulos literarios, sin antecedentes políticos.... Solo y desconocido, la ha recorrido bizarramente...

(1) El Vampiro (1834). Batilde o La América del Norte (1835). El Cuákero (1835). La Cómica (1835).

(2) Probably Espronceda.

"y la ha recorrido para salir de ella victorioso y
"triunfante." (1)

El Trovador was a worthy successor to Don Álvaro. The new play did not astonish the audience in the same way as its predecessor had done, but it thrilled and delighted the public considerably more. In this work, the classical conventions are completely ignored, and the theories of Romanticism are well illustrated, for El Trovador is a full blooded Romantic drama. The Unities are broken, and throughout the piece there is great freedom of imagination and inspiration. The subject of the play is rather fantastic and terrifying, but eminently suited to the type of dramatic production of which it is a prominent example. The action takes place in Aragón during the course of the fifteenth century. We have, therefore, a real historical background to the work, but its main interest lies not here, but in the strong human passions of love, hatred, and vengeance, which are presented to us. This drama does not give a detailed, accurate description of the customs of the Spaniards of

(1) Artículos de Crítica Literaria y Artística. Larra.
(Madrid 1923) Vol.II., p.223.

the fifteenth century, neither does it aim to set forth any strong moral lesson, nor present any profound psychological studies; but Gutíerrez, by means of a strong plot with much intrigue and action, reveals to us the fierce, intense conflicts arising from the passions of man and skilfully leads up to the hideous climax when Death claims his three victims. The atmosphere in the drama is Spanish but not so definitely national as that in Rivas' masterpiece, although the influence of Don Álvaro and Macías is evident. At the same time we can also trace the influences of foreign Romanticism, particularly of Victor Hugo and Dumas (père) whose works Gutíerrez greatly admired.

The play is intensely dramatic. We feel continually that the strings are being pulled by the hands of a master, for the author has decided ability in creating situations and in keeping up the interest right to the end. His conclusion to the different acts is very satisfying; and the end of the drama is made more impressive by the directness and simplicity of its style. The plot is good but complicated at times and conceived on too grand a scale for a play. Indeed in some respects it is more suitable

for a novel than a theatrical production. The narrow limits of the theatre are insufficient for the number of incidents, the three equally important characters, and the double drama of love and vengeance which occurs in this play. These faults, however, are mainly due to lack of experience. We must bear in mind that the author was only twenty-three years of age when his first important work was produced. On the other hand it is the qualities of this very youthfulness, the spontaneity and the freshness of spirit, which make special appeal in this work. We are constantly aware of the author's fertile imagination, his love of the mysterious, his melancholy, and his passionate temperament. Passion is one of the conspicuous qualities in the treatment of the drama, but a passion which appears to lack something of the vigorous strength and force of Rivas and to be possessed of more sadness and tenderness. The character of Leonor, the heroine, is well drawn, and the same may be said of the sinister Azucena.

El Trovador is written partly in prose and partly in verse, as was customary with many of the works of the Romantic school. The author's versification is wonderfully

easy, and his diction is excellent. His verses are remarkable for their lofty beauty, their fluidity, their inspired harmony and their exquisite lyricism. It is obvious even in this, his first successful drama, that Gutiérrez has remarkable poetic gifts and his talent is apparent in all his later works. His verses consistently attain a very high standard and do not show the signs of inequality which are characteristic of other authors⁽¹⁾ of the period. Indeed it may be confidently stated that much of the success of his first drama was due to its beautiful form.

In the mind of the general public, the name of Gutiérrez is always associated with El Trovador, which was his first contribution to the Spanish Romantic theatre. Some of the popularity of this play was due to its being brought to the people on the crest of the wave of Romanticism which swept through the country at that time. El Trovador was the most popular play of Gutiérrez, but it is questionable whether it was his best. The author was a very prolific dramatist, having given to the Spanish

(1) E.g. Rivas and Zorrilla.

stage about sixty-eight plays in all (including translations), and it is surprising that more emphasis has not been laid on some of his more mature works.⁽¹⁾

Although they may lack something of the freshness and spontaneity of his first drama, yet they have gained in artistry and restraint.

Almost thirty years after the triumph of El Trovador in 1835, there was presented Venganza Catalana, a drama by Gutierrez, which was very favourably received. Fifty-six performances were required to satisfy the enthusiasm of the public. It is a four act drama, written in verse, the action of which takes place in Andrinopolis at the beginning of the fourteenth century. The plot is extremely complicated, but its conflicts of love, hatred and vengeance are well blended and worked out. Incident follows incident in rapid succession until we come to the scene where the hero, Roger de Flor, is treacherously⁽²⁾ assassinated by the order of the Emperor Michael, who fears his power and influence. The culminating point of

(1) Simón Bocanegra (1843). Venganza Catalana (1864).
Juan Lorenzo (1865).

(2) Act III. Scene 12.

(1) Act IV. Scene 13.

(2) Act IV. Scene 14, last four lines.

the drama is reached in the following act when Roger's forces, led by his friend Berenguer, and inspired by his widow María, exact full payment⁽¹⁾ for the murder of their beloved leader. Princess of Bulgaria and the moving spirit in the taking of vengeance, she speaks the final solemn words of the play.

"Llorando queda, y mañana,
 "aun después de enjuto el llanto,
 "recordará con espanto
 "la venganza catalana."⁽²⁾

The drama is romantic in story, conception, and in form; its inspiration is chivalric and Spanish. The rules and classical conventions are ignored, and the spirit of the work is free and inspired. The characterisation is not particularly good except in the case of the heroine María, who appears as a strong, determined figure, yet capable of much love, tenderness and sympathy. In form the work is beyond criticism, being written wholly in beautiful and vigorous verse. The metres used are mainly the 'romance', the hendecasyllabic assonantal metre, and 'redondillas'. These are well blended, and Gutiérrez shows that his hand has in no way lost its cunning.

(1) Act IV. Scene 13.

(2) Act IV. Scene 14, last four lines.

The main reason, however, for the great success of this rather belated Romantic drama lies in its intense patriotism. The author aims at producing such an atmosphere of heroism and patriotism that no Spanish audience of that day could fail to be moved. María, the heroine, may have been a Bulgarian princess, but in spirit and convictions she becomes the very incarnation of Spain. Enthusiastic shouts of approval must have greeted the lines in which she formally declares her adoption of Spain as her native country.

"Yo no soy desde este día
 "griega, ¡no!, soy española.
 "Aquí la noble altivez
 "de mi nueva patria siento..."(1)

The same enthusiasm would be apparent in the next act when she urges on the Spaniards to victory with the words,

"¿Por qué en fútiles alardes
 "gastan la potente saña?
 "Triunfe por último España (2)
 "de esa raza de cobardes."

(1) Act II. Scene 9, ll. 650-653.

(2) Act III. Scene 1, ll. 37-40.

Nevertheless, in spite of all this splendid glorification of Spain and her valour, we cannot help wondering if Gutiérrez did not sacrifice too much in order to gain his object. He obviously wished to make appeal to the patriotism of the members of his audience and thus to gain their applause. In this he was successful. But, after all, the hero and heroine of this intensely patriotic Spanish drama were Roger de Flor, an Italian adventurer, and María, a princess of Bulgaria. There is surely something artificial and contradictory in the author's conception of patriotism.

As for Juan Lorenzo, which appeared in 1865, and which was the author's favourite drama, it was of a very different type and evidently⁽¹⁾ did not make much appeal to the public. The audience missed the swift following thrills of the previous plays. They felt that the action was slow and that the chief character Juan Lorenzo was neither heroic nor magnificent enough to be the hero of a Romantic drama. The truth is that this work of Gutiérrez is not quite like his others. It is more subtle, mature

(1) Juan Lorenzo was performed only eight times.

and restrained. It is philosophical and didactic (although not obviously so) and shows fewer traces of Romanticism than any other of the author's works.

In Juan Lorenzo there are only seven characters and but two⁽¹⁾ different stage settings. In both these ways the piece forms a contrast to any typical Romantic drama. The story of the play takes place in Valencia during the disturbances which occurred there at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The action is less complicated, less vigorous than usual, and it is slow indeed in developing. The drama is really the study of an idealist who sets in motion forces which finally become uncontrollable and destroy him. According to the definition of one critic, "Juan Lorenzo es el revolucionario de buena fé que suelta "el viento de las tempestades, que no prevé el estrago que "las acompaña, y que atemorizado de su propia audacia, "pretende encauzar el torrente asolador, y es al fin "envuelto y arrebatado por sus olas."⁽²⁾

(1) Act I., act III., act IV. taking place in a room in Juan Lorenzo's house.

(1) Act II. in a courtyard of the 'Audiencia de Valencia'.

(2) Autores Dramáticos Contemporáneos. (Madrid 1881)
Article by Cayetano Rosell. Vol.I., p.94.

The dramatic construction of the piece is sound, and the interest is well maintained despite the slow-moving action. The tragic end is far from being unexpected, for, as early as the third act we are informed that Juan Lorenzo's heart is weak and that any great shock may prove fatal.

Sorolla: "¡Oh! no le irrites. ¿Ignoras
"que de su mal la violencia
"puede?....."

Lorenzo: "Ya sé que la ciencia (1)
"tiene contadas mis horas."

Therefore we are prepared for the passing of Lorenzo, but not for the discovery of his death by Bernarda, attired in her bridal garb and ready for her wedding. This incident is typically Romantic, as are several others in the drama - such as that of Francín changing cloaks with the Count and sacrificing his life for him,⁽²⁾ and that of the arrival of Sorolla who comes to warn Lorenzo that the mob is clamouring for his death, and who finds only a corpse.⁽³⁾

(1) Act III. Scene 4, ll. 415-418.

(2) Act IV. Scene 7. and many other passages.

(3) Act IV. Scene 15.

(4) Act IV. Scenes 13 and 14.

(5) Act IV. Scenes 15, 17. 988-991.

The characterisation of Bernarda, the heroine, is excellent. In her we see a woman of ability, generous, tenderhearted, wise, and possessed of judgment and self control. She may not make such wide appeal as Leonor or María, but in reality she is a finer, stronger creation than either of these. We note the quick decisive way in which she refuses the Count's suit, even when it has the approval of the king.

"¿Y el Rey también os ha dicho
 "Sé amado? ¿Presume el Rey
 "disponer de mi albedrío?" (1)

We admire her coolness⁽²⁾ and courage after the attack made on her, her love⁽³⁾ and affection for Juan Lorenzo, and her generosity⁽⁴⁾ in coming to the Count's assistance. We witness her inconsolable grief⁽⁵⁾ for Lorenzo and her fearless denunciation of Sorolla.

"Es su herida más profunda,
 "que la que infiere una mano.
 "Y es tuya la odiosa palma
 "de ese triunfo." (6)

(1) Act III. Scene 6, ll. 644-646.

(2) Act I. Scene 8.

(3) Act II. Scene 10, and many other passages.

(4) Act III. Scene 9, l. 773.

(5) Act IV. Scenes 13 and 14.

(6) Act IV. Scene 15, ll. 988-991.

She, naturally, makes a deeper impression on us than Juan Lorenzo himself, who is a weaker character, easily discouraged and disheartened, a man of high ideals fighting against ill health and moral indecision. The other characters are mere figures which hardly come to life in our minds at all, personifications of treachery, ignorance, pride or sympathy.

The literary style is in keeping with the greatness of the subject, for the drama is written entirely in verse, which in restrained beauty and harmony excels all the previous works of the author. For the most part the piece is composed of 'romances' and 'redondillas'. Very occasionally we find long hendecasyllabic lines appearing in passages which the author wishes to make impressive. One very striking scene written mostly in this metre occurs in the third act,⁽¹⁾ when Lorenzo describes his ominous dream to Bernarda. Another passage which cannot fail to win approval is the hero's speech in the second act,⁽²⁾ where he becomes eloquent in defence of woman's honour and condemns the crimes of the nobles. It ends

(1) Act III. Scene 5.

(2) Act II. Scene 7, ll. 321-372 (written in 'romances').

thus:

"De otro modo, merecemos
 "que nuestras hembras deshonren,
 "que nuestra sangre derramen,
 "que insulten nuestros dolores." (1)

These passages have beauty and harmony, richness and colour. Yet elsewhere there is a simplicity, and an atmosphere of restraint which almost give a classical effect to the style.

Marquesa: "Para eso ha nacido el roble:
 "para arrostrar huracanes.

Lorenzo: "Pero no siempre es feliz:
 "que cuando lo quiere el cielo
 "más de un roble viene al suelo
 "arrancado de raíz." (2)

This sobriety makes the style effective and expressive, while not detracting in any way from its picturesque beauty.

It is rather strange that this mature work of Gutiérrez was not more appreciated by the Spanish public. It, certainly, lacks the fire of El Trovador, the vigour and patriotism of Venganza Catalana, but it has other qualities to recommend it. The explanation of its

(1) Act II. Scene 7, ll. 369-372.

(2) Act I. Scene 4, ll. 420-425.

failure may be that it reads very much better than it plays.

So we leave García Gutiérrez, who in his own individual way, contributed to the triumph of the Romantic drama in Spain. We remember him for his natural dramatic instinct and skill, for his imagination, for his inspired passion and very specially for the beauty and harmony of his verses.

At this period it seemed as if each successive year was a landmark in the rapid development of the drama of Romanticism. Eighteen hundred and thirty-seven, the year following the production of El Trovador, saw the triumph of Los Amantes de Teruel, a play written by Hartzenbusch⁽¹⁾, an author whose mother was Spanish and whose father German. He was a man of great intelligence, wide learning and culture. Literature appeared to attract him greatly, and he was well versed in the works of many foreign authors and in the classics. Despite his poverty, he somehow managed to procure books and plays, and he also succeeded in being present at many dramatic productions of the day. His love for the

(1) Juan Eugenio Hartzenbusch (1806 - 1880).

theatre was great and showed itself early in life. In 1823 he first began to adapt French and Italian plays.⁽¹⁾ A few years later, he did the same with several of the Spanish 'Siglo de Oro Comedias'.⁽²⁾ He was an enthusiastic admirer of his country's literature and also of her history, which he had studied carefully and of which he had a wide knowledge. To begin with, Hartzenbusch was content with merely adapting and remodelling plays; but as time went on and as his enthusiasm for the theatre deepened, he decided to launch forth on his own account, and he wrote two original historical dramas,⁽³⁾ one of which was hissed by the audience and the other was not even presented. Nothing daunted, the author continued his efforts and concentrated all his energies on another play, which appeared in the Prince's Theatre on 19th January, 1837, and which was extraordinarily successful. Public and critics alike were enthusiastic about the drama Los Amantes de Teruel and about the new writer who had

(1) By Molière, Dumas, Voltaire, Alfieri.

(2) By Lope, Calderón, Tirso, Rojas, Moreto.

(3) Las Hijas de Gracián Ramírez 1831 (hissed).
El Infante Don Fernando el de Antequera (1831).

come to the front. As in the case of Gutiérrez, so it was with Hartzenbusch, for fame came to him in a single night. According to Larra, "Pasar cinco o seis lustros oscuro y desconocido y llegar una noche entre otras, convocar a un pueblo, hacer tributaria su curiosidad, alzar una cortina, conmover el corazón, subjugar el juicio, hacerse aplaudir y aclamar eso es algo." (1)

The subject of Los Amantes de Teruel is thoroughly national and popular, for everyone had heard of those two unfortunate lovers who were said to have lived and died in Teruel about the beginning of the thirteenth century. It seems fairly probable that those persons actually did exist, for their tombs (or what were supposed to be their tombs) were discovered in a chapel of St. Peter's church in Teruel in the year 1555. But the story of their death has been related in so many different ways, that it is impossible for us to conjecture what the original account was. Much has been written about Isabel and Marsilla, and their story even appeared in Boccaccio's Decameron. Tirso de Molina and also Montalván wrote

(1) Artículos de Crítica Literaria y Artística. Larra. (Madrid 1923) Vol.II., p.305.

dramas on this theme, but their versions were not very successful, and they lost all popularity when the excellent work of Hartzenbusch appeared. Into his version of the Spanish legend the author infused such originality and inspiration that the tradition was perfected in his hands. The subject was old, but the treatment was new and ingenious.

The play is a four act drama written in verse and prose. Originally, when it was first presented, the piece contained five acts, but later Hartzenbusch, who was an indefatigable worker, revised his drama and produced another version, differing considerably in form from the first. It is to this later form⁽¹⁾ that we make reference here. The scenery is simple; the first act takes place in Valencia, and the other three in or near Teruel. The characters are ten in number, and the action of the drama is completed within the space of seven days, although of course we are made acquainted with the happenings of six years before. The piece belongs to the Romantic school of dramatic production and

(1) Los Amantes de Teruel, Drama Refundida en Cuatro Actos en Verso y Prosa. Autores Dramáticos Contemporáneos. (Madrid 1881) Vol.I.

disregards the neo-classic conventions. Yet the spirit of Romanticism is not quite so evident here and its theories are not carried to such extremes as, for instance, in Don Alvaro.

One of the things we must never allow ourselves to forget is that Hartzenbusch was a student. He was cultured, wise, learned and was continually seeking knowledge. In this respect he differs considerably from the other Romantic dramatists of the period. His close contact with the literary masterpieces of all nations and all periods left its mark on his mind and on his works, as did also his industry. Los Amantes de Teruel is worked out carefully and wisely, and we are constantly aware of the good taste and skill of the author. Hartzenbusch, however, in spite of his admirable intellectual qualities, did not lack the inspiration and depth of feeling which were necessary for the writing of a spirited drama. We may admire the culture and skill of the author; yet at the same time we are compelled to appreciate the passion, spontaneity and real feeling which are evident in the play. The same originality and freshness did not appear in any of the later dramas of Hartzenbusch.

The dramatic form of Los Amantes de Teruel is good. The plot is well constructed and developed, and the tragic conclusion comes about more naturally than one might expect. It is a difficult task to convert this story into a satisfactory dramatic work, and Hartzenbusch has done well with the material at his disposal. In the first act the author explains simply and effectively the reason for the hero's delay. Marsilla has made a fortune and is hastening home to claim his bride. Unfortunately he has been captured by the Moors and is now held captive by them in Valencia. This introductory information is well presented. In Teruel,⁽¹⁾ Isabel is anxiously awaiting news of her lover. Overhearing the threats of Azagra to her mother,⁽²⁾ our heroine decides to sacrifice herself and she consents to marry the blackmailer. Don Rodrigo de Azagra is not a conventional villain, and he has some good points to commend him. His love for Isabel is great,⁽³⁾ and he

(1) Los Amantes de Teruel. Act II. Scene 1.

(2) Do. Do. Act II. Scene 8.

(3) Do. Do. Act III. Scene 2.

is willing to give her all her desires; but he is unscrupulous and will go to any length to win her, even blackmailing⁽¹⁾ her mother to obtain her support for the union. Near the end of the drama there is also a recurrence of Azagra's treachery, when, defeated by Marsilla in a duel, he again threatens to make use of the letters as a means of vengeance.

"Pero mi sangre costará bien cara.

"..... Me vengaré en don Pedro,

"en su esposa, en los tres: guardo las cartas."⁽²⁾

The character of Zulima is in the approved Romantic manner. She is the evil spirit of the piece, doing her utmost to separate the two lovers, and trying to take vengeance on them both even at the moment when she herself meets her death.⁽³⁾ The story works up to an impressive scene⁽⁴⁾ which takes place between Marsilla and Isabel. This part is beautiful, full of passion and tenderness and paves the way for the end of the drama when both characters die. The conclusion is tragic

(1) Los Amantes de Teruel. Act II. Scene 8.

(2) Do. Do. Act IV. Scene 7, l. 421.

(3) Do. Do. Act IV. Scene 10.

(4) Los Amantes de Teruel. Act IV. Scene 7.

but noble and sublime in contrast to that of many other Romantic dramas.

The characterisation in this work is good. The heroine herself is a strong creation, showing patience and resignation and later displaying considerable firmness in her decision to wed Azagra. She is faithful and honourable. There is a good portrayal of the character of Margarita, Isabel's mother, who, while in great distress of mind on her own account, never ceases to think of her daughter and to lament the unfairness of the sacrifice she insists on making for her mother's sake. It is an interesting point that Margarita even goes so far as to rail at the injustice of the Spanish laws of honour, saying,

"¡Hija infeliz en amor!
 "¡Hija desdichada mía!
 "Perdona la tiranía
 "de las leyes del honor." (1)

On the other hand, the character of Don Pedro, Isabel's father, is that of the conventional Spanish gentleman, possessing affection for his daughter, but obsessed by the idea of honour. His outlook on life may be summed

(1) Los Amantes de Teruel. Act II. Scene 13, last four lines.

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up in his own words:

"En el honor de tu padre
 "no se vió mancha jamás:
 "juventud honrada pide
 "más honrada ancianidad." (1)

Teresa, the faithful servant, makes few appearances on the stage, but her character is well defined. Her love for Margarita and Isabel is clearly shown, and her irrepressible desire to express her opinions⁽²⁾ makes her true to type and amusing. Her humour is on occasion caustic and apt, as when she comments on Zulima and the bad news she has brought.

"¡Dios confunda
 "la boca ruin que nos cuenta
 "noticia tan triste! ... Pero
 "un prójimo que no prueba
 "cerdo ni vino, ¿qué puede
 "dar de sí?" (3)

With regard to form, the drama is written in prose and poetry. A few passages of prose occur in the second and third acts, while the best sections of the work, the first and last acts, are entirely in verse. The question

(1) Los Amantes de Teruel. Act II. Scene 2, ll. 60-63.

(2) Do. Do. Act II. Scene 1.

(3) Do. Do. Do. Act II. Scene 10, ll. 631-636.

might be raised as to whether Hartzenbusch really gained anything by introducing the few prose scenes that do appear, whether these are particularly suited to prose, and whether it would not have contributed more to the unity of the whole, if verse had been employed throughout. The poetical style is mostly in keeping with the nobility of the subject and is characteristically Spanish. Passages⁽¹⁾ may be found in Los Amantes de Teruel which can compare with those of any of the other Romantic dramas in beauty, harmony, vigour, and versification. The author was constantly at work polishing and pruning his style. Sometimes this process was carried too far, and we find parts⁽²⁾ where the so-called improved version was less satisfactory or at any rate less popular than the original. The wide studies of Hartzenbusch and particularly his knowledge of the classics have influenced his style and have given it a conciseness, a serenity and an elegance which are very pleasant.

After this dramatic success Hartzenbusch made other ventures in the theatrical world. In 1838, there appeared

(1) E.g. Los Amantes de Teruel, Act IV. Scene 7.

(2) E.g. Do. Do. Act I. Scene 4,
ll. 191-194.

Doña Mencía which was fairly successful, but much inferior to Los Amantes de Teruel. Later we have other⁽¹⁾ historical dramas, but none worthy to be compared with the triumph of 1837. The author's powers seemed to diminish as he grew older, and the plays of his maturity are much less brilliant than the inspired production of his youth. Hartzenbusch did not have the fecundity⁽²⁾ of many Spanish writers, but he did possess amazing adaptability, and he attempted successfully almost every type of dramatic production. He wrote symbolic drama, philosophical and historical dramas, comedies of magic, remodellings of works of other authors, even a 'zarzuela'. Of the dramatists of the period, Hartzenbusch was the most complete, although neither the most fertile nor the most original. He combined in a remarkable way several of the characteristics of the national 'Siglo de Oro comedia' with those of the modern French Romantic Drama. Later in life, this author grew increasingly critical of his literary style, and the form of his works became more and

(1) Alfonso el Casto (1841). La Jura en Santa Gadea (1845).
La Madre de Pelayo (1846). La Ley de Raza (1852).

(2) Hartzenbusch wrote about 26 original works (excluding adaptations).

more refined. Never again did he succeed in recapturing the inspiration of Los Amantes de Teruel which was the last but one of the outstanding dramas of the Romantic age, and which we remember as being the greatest of the dramatic productions of Hartzenbusch.

Few great Romantic dramas appeared after the first creative impulse of the movement had passed. In 1839 indeed, only about half a dozen original Spanish plays were staged, the others being mostly adaptations or translations of foreign⁽¹⁾ Romantic works. Several years were to elapse before the presentation of another really successful drama. It was in March 1844 that Don Juan Tenorio was produced amidst great popular enthusiasm. Its author was Zorrilla⁽²⁾, a man who was already well known to the public, having produced much beautiful lyric poetry, many admirable national legends and several⁽³⁾ successful dramatic works. Even at this comparatively early age, Zorrilla had given abundant proof of his genius

(1) The majority of these were from French authors.

(2) José Zorrilla (1817 - 1893).

(3) Among these, El Zapatero y el Rey. Part I. 1840.
Do. Do. Part II. 1841.
El Puñal del Godo. 1843.

and also of his fertility.⁽¹⁾ It was also clear that the author was an ardent supporter of all the theories of the Romantic school and that the chief source of his inspiration lay in the glorious history of Spain's past. Don Juan Tenorio, which was apparently written in the space of twenty-one days, was an immediate popular success. Despite much adverse criticism it established itself firmly in the affections of the Spanish people, and its popularity has not diminished with the passing of time. In November of each year, Don Juan Tenorio is presented and acclaimed all over Spain, on the occasion of the Feast of All Souls. Its annual presentation attracts large, enthusiastic crowds to the theatres, and the audiences unite in paying homage to this great work of Zorrilla, one of the glories of Spain and now one of its national institutions. An admirer writes, "Ha alcanzado ya un raro privilegio que sólo comparte con "el Quijote. Habrá en España quien no haya oído hablar "de Cervantes, pero para todos es familiar el ingenioso "hidalgo manchego; podrá haber quien no tenga noticia

(1) In the year 1843 he wrote six dramatic works.

"de Zorrilla, pero nadie dejará de conocer al gallardo
"mancebo sevillano."⁽¹⁾

This drama which appeared in 1844 was definitely Romantic, being free from all restraints and heeding no conventions. Zorrilla's genius resembled that of Lope de Vega, in that it was not of the type to be confined by dogmatic rules of any kind. Absolute freedom was required for the development of such dramatic talent, and it was in this spirit that the work was written. The author's fantastic imagination is allowed to run riot, and his passion and vigour are felt throughout. The drama possesses much action, intrigue and mystery, love affairs, duels, murders, and supernatural elements. Particularly in the second part, the atmosphere becomes exceptionally weird, and in the graveyard scenes we have statues coming to life, and spectres and angels hovering around. At the end of the play the souls of Don Juan and Doña Inés leave their bodies and fly into space in the form of two flames. The actual repentance of the hero takes place after death, for we find that he hears

(1) Zorrilla, Su Vida y sus Obras. N. Alonso Cortés.
(Valladolid 1916) Vol.I., p.441.

(1) Don Juan Tenorio. Part II. Act III. Scene 2. 1.116.

the bells tolling for his passing and beholds his own funeral cortege going slowly by.

Estatua: "Y las campanas doblando
 "por ti están, y están cavando
 "la fosa en que te han de echar.

"

D. Juan: "¿Y aquel entierro que pasa?

Estatua: "Es el tuyo."⁽¹⁾

This is all purely Romantic; it is also rather illogical and incoherent.

The setting of the piece is in Seville and the action takes place in the last years of the reign of Charles V. The whole atmosphere of the work is the chivalric atmosphere of Spain of that period. The author has manifestly steeped himself in the past of his native country and is perfectly acquainted with her traditions and her spirit. He sympathetically identifies himself with her old ideas of nobility and chivalry, reproducing Spain's past as few other writers have been able to do. Zorrilla became a great national dramatist, one who continually dwelt on the ancient grandeurs of Spain, who

(1) Don Juan Tenorio. Part II. Act III. Scene 2, 1.110.

idealised her splendours, and colourfully described her cloisters and her palaces.

The drama depends almost entirely on the actions of its chief character, Don Juan Tenorio, who, in origin, is completely Spanish. Certainly he has also appeared in other⁽¹⁾ literatures, but this fact does not prevent the above statement being true, for all these foreign works were Spanish in inspiration. Don Juan, the bold deceiver of women, the arrogant, the valiant, is the central figure in a national tradition which was much used as material for plays. As early as the end of the sixteenth century, we find Juan de la Cueva writing La Comedia del Infamador, where the chief character Leucino bears some little resemblance to that of the modern Don Juan. In 1630, Tirso de Molina published a piece called El Burlador de Sevilla, where he successfully presented a type of Don Juan which has served as model for other authors. Later this work was adapted by Zamora with the title Convidado de Piedra. In addition to having those Spanish sources of inspiration, Zorrilla was also

(1) Don Juan by Moliere (1665). Don Giovanni by Mozart (1787). Don Juan by Byron (1819-24).

acquainted with the pieces of Molière and Mozart, and he also showed signs of having been influenced by Don Juan de Marana⁽¹⁾ (1836), one of Dumas' least successful dramas. As a result, the previous Spanish version has been considerably modified. It is of particular interest to note that the conclusion of the piece has been changed, Zorrilla romantically deciding to save Don Juan's soul through the medium of Doña Inés' love, instead of allowing him to suffer the just penalty for his life of debauchery and dissoluteness.

Doña Inés: "La voluntad de Dios es;
 "de mi alma con la amargura
 "purifiqué su alma impura,
 "y Dios concedió a mi afán
 "la salvación de don Juan
 "al pie de la sepultura." (2)

One of the principal reasons for the amazing popularity of this drama is found in the appeal made by the hero himself. Despite his immorality, his pride, his callousness and brutality, there is assuredly something about Don Juan which catches the popular interest and

(1) Which closely resembles in parts Les Âmes du Purgatoire (1825) by Mérimée.

(2) Don Juan Tenorio. Part II. Act III. Scene 3, ll. 181-186.

attracts the popular mind. The members of the audience thoroughly appreciate his dauntless valour. They revel in his imperturbable coolness in the face of all dangers, his arrogance, passion and self-sufficiency, his defiance of laws, conventions, and the wrath of God and man.

They marvel how the hero, after heedlessly seducing many women, comes under the spell of Doña Inés, whose charm and innocence appear to captivate and reform him. They sympathise with the heroine, when she says,

"O arráncame el corazón,
"O ámame, porque te adoro." (1)

and doubtless applaud when Don Juan answers,

"¡Alma mía! Esa palabra
"cambia de modo mi ser,
"que alcanzo que puede hacer
"hasta que el Edén se me abra.
"No es, doña Inés, Satanás,
"quien pone este amor en mí;
"es Dios, que quiere por ti
"ganarme para Él quizás."

The desire for reformation and happiness seems sincere, but it is not very deep rooted, for before the end of

yet realising in a way his faults and vices.

(1) Don Juan Tenorio. Part I. Act IV. Scene 3,
ll. 347-356.

(2) Do. Do. Part I. Act IV. Scene 3,
ll. 589-592.

the act, Don Juan⁽¹⁾, unable to bear the taunts of cowardice which are levelled against him, cold-bloodedly shoots Don Gonzalo, the father of Doña Inés, and kills his former friend Don Luis Mejía in a duel. Taking Don Juan exactly as he is, with all his many vices and his few virtues, the Spanish people appreciate him to the full. They follow his movements throughout the drama, for they see in him the central figure of their old national tradition, and in addition they recognise in him a member of the same race as that to which they themselves belong. As for Doña Inés, she embodies the ideal of Spanish womanhood, being beautiful and charming, but above all, innocent and virtuous. It is principally for her virtue that Don Juan loves her.

Don Juan: "Ni amé la hermosura en ella,
 "ni sus gracias adoré;
 "lo que adoro es la virtud,
 "Don Gonzalo, en doña Inés."⁽²⁾

She is faithful and self-sacrificing, loving Don Juan sincerely and willing to go to any extreme to save him, yet realising in a way his faults and vices.

(1) Don Juan Tenorio. Part I. Act IV. Scene 9.

(2) Do. Do. Part I. Act IV. Scene 9,
 ll. 589-592.

Doña Inés: "Tal vez Satán puso en vos
 "su vista fascinadora,
 "su palabra seductora,
 "y el amor que negó a Dios." (1)

She expresses no desire for vengeance, even although Don Juan kills her father; and when the mob calls for justice for Doña Inés, her unexpected answer is, "Pero no contra Don Juan" (2). Her spirit of Christian charity and forgiveness makes a deep impression on the minds of the public of Spain. The lasting popular success of this drama is largely due to the appeal made to any Spanish audience by those two characters and very specially by Don Juan himself. In his work, Zorrilla ably acted as interpreter of this legendary figure, which has become so closely associated with the popular soul of Spain.

The drama is written wholly in verse and consists of two distinct parts. Section one is divided into four acts and is concerned with the extraordinary happenings of one single night in Seville. Part two contains three acts, which relate the events of another night in Seville

(1) Don Juan Tenorio. Part I. Act IV. Scene 3,
 ll. 320-332.

(2) Do. Do. Part I. Act IV. Scene 9,
 last line.

five years later. Section one is the better of the two; but, in spite of its absurdity and illogical conclusion, the second part attracts, because of its air of mystery, its religious fervour and its strong resemblance to the 'autos sacramentales' of ancient fame. The action is well conceived and developed. Horror follows horror until the climax of the first part is reached when Don Juan succeeds in escaping from his country house near Seville, after having committed nearly every conceivable crime. Although one may criticise the lack of logic and artistic truth in the conclusion, yet the second part has been developed with vigour and skill and the interest of the audience is held to the very end of the drama.

Don Juan Tenorio is written in rich and colourful Spanish. Indeed the flowing literary style is one of the greatest assets of the drama. The lyrical element is pronounced, and we are continually reminded of the fact that Zorrilla was a poet, before ever he was a dramatist. The music of his lines seems to pour forth without any effort, and the varied richness of his verse continually impresses us. We feel that the exquisite form of the 'Siglo de Oro' dramatists has been brought to life

(1) *Don Juan Tenorio*. Part I. Act I. Scene 12. ll. 438-

524.

(2) Do. Do. Part I. Act IV. Scene 3.

again. Zorrilla has at his disposal an immense vocabulary which he uses very effectively. His lines have a habit of lingering in the memory, and whenever one re-reads the drama, one feels immediately the familiarity of certain passages, so great has been the impression made by their beauty and harmony. Most Spaniards know parts of the work by heart. One of the popular passages occurs at the beginning, when Don Juan Tenorio relates all his crimes of the past year. This long account⁽¹⁾ includes some particularly well known lines.

"Aquí está don Juan Tenorio,
 "y no hay hombre para él.
 "Desde la princesa altiva
 "a la que pesca en ruin barca,
 "no hay hembra a quien no suscriba,
 "y cualquiera empresa abarca
 "si en oro o valor estriba.
 "Búsquenle los reñidores;
 "cérquenle los jugadores;
 "quien se precie que le ataje;
 "a ver si hay quien le aventaje
 "en juego, en lid o en amores."

Lines of outstanding appeal are to be found all through the drama, but special mention may be made of those⁽²⁾ occurring in the famous love scene between Don Juan and

(1) Don Juan Tenorio. Part I. Act I. Scene 12, ll. 438-524.

(2) Do. Do. Part I. Act IV. Scene 3.

Doña Inés, and also of the haunting 'décimas' spoken by Don Juan in front of his beloved's sepulchre.

"Inocente doña Inés,
 "cuya hermosa juventud
 "encerró en el ataúd
 "quien llorando está a tus pies;
 "si de esa piedra a través
 "puedes mirar la amargura
 "del alma que tu hermosura
 "adoró con tanto afán,
 "prepara un lado a don Juan
 "en tu misma sepultura." (1)

We have no difficulty in agreeing with the judgment of Piñeyro when he says, "Encantado y hechizado por la "melodía deliciosa, no hay auditorio español que resista "su influencia." (2)

Don Juan Tenorio is a drama with several apparent weaknesses; but even its defects are essentially Spanish. Zorrilla was a born improviser, and he was constantly compelled by straitened circumstances to use or rather abuse this talent of his. His very facility of composition made him produce poorly finished work. There are many inequalities in his drama which, though it reaches great

(1) Don Juan Tenorio. Part II. Act I. Scene 3, ll. 305-314.

(2) El Romanticismo en España. Piñeyro. (Paris 1904) p.191.

heights, occasionally descends to the ridiculous. His thoughts are not profound, nor is his psychology subtle, for the portraits of his characters are painted with wide sweeps of the brush. One of his chief faults is verbosity, and if Hartzenbusch is credited with being a stylist who can say much in few words, Zorrilla excels in being able to say little in many words. "Conmueve menos que "admira: es más feliz en la pintura de la naturaleza que "en la de los pensamientos: es más artista que pensador "y más colorista que dibujante: más vario que profundo."⁽¹⁾ So says Fernández Florez, and many others have seen and condemned defects in this drama. It is interesting to note that there has been no more severe critic than Zorrilla himself who, for one reason or another, was not overproud of his Don Juan Tenorio and never considered it his masterpiece. Although some critics see little in the drama which is worthy of praise, yet it lives and probably will live, for it possesses an inexplicable appeal which has given it a sure place in the heart and affections of the Spanish nation.

(1) Autores Dramáticos Contemporáneos. (Madrid 1881)
 Article by Isidro Fernández Florez. Vol.I.,
 p.173.

The drama of which Zorrilla himself was ever proud was written five years later than Don Juan Tenorio. It was called Traidor, Inconfeso y Mártir and was the author's last dramatic production of value. It was surprisingly restrained and polished and formed a decided contrast in many ways to the 1844 work. The plot is not a very strong one, nor does it contain much that is original; yet the action is better proportioned, more logical, less fantastic and extravagant, and more moving than that of its predecessor. Throughout the work the tone of Christian self-sacrifice is felt, and the whole piece moves on a lofty moral plane. The two chief characters are well presented and we are impressed by the figure of the hero, Gabriel Espinosa, who is courageous, resolute, and self-sacrificing. The drama which consists of three acts written in verse, contains certain passages of great beauty, particularly some of the verses⁽¹⁾ spoken between Gabriel and Doña Aurora in the second act. Yet this drama would not have raised Zorrilla to the heights of fame which he actually did attain, because it lacks the vigour, the

(1) Traidor, Inconfeso y Mártir. Act II. Scene 9.

passion, the freshness, and the national inspiration of Don Juan Tenorio.

Zorrilla outlived his period, for it was not until 1893 that he died, when the generation with whom he had worked had passed away. Don Juan Tenorio was the last of the great romantic dramas, and it will remain as one of the most wholeheartedly romantic of its type. Zorrilla himself, although he was influenced by foreign Romanticists, was by nature one of the direct descendants of the 'Siglo de Oro' dramatists. His inspiration, ideas, and dramatic conceptions, and, above all, his literary style, closely resemble those of the glorious age. Although he is the production of a new century and a revolutionary period, he is able to take this apparently new, free spirit and interpret it in accordance with the ideals of Spain and the great spirit of the past masters. As a well deserved tribute to this essentially national dramatist, let us quote the expressive words of Blanco García, "El (Zorrilla) supo regenerar con el más "puro y simpático españolismo la revolución que desde "otros climas había penetrado en nuestra literatura; él "supo convertir aquella musa informe, vacilante y sin

"norte fijo en intérprete digna del sentimiento de las
 "grandezas nacionales; él con manos vigorosos arrancó
 "para siempre del arte la planta exótica del pseudo-
 "clasicismo estéril y orgulloso, y renovó los días de
 "nuestros grandes siglos, el XVI. y el XVII., prestando
 "nueva vida al mundo ideal y ya casi olvidado de Calderón
 "y Lope de Vega." (1)

In dealing with the development of the Romantic drama, only the prominent works have been spoken of. There were, however, large numbers of plays produced during this period, and some of these are worthy of mention. Guzmán el Bueno was the work of Gil y Zárate (2). It was favourably received largely because of its noble sentiments, human interest, and national spirit, but it had no great effect on the development of dramatic literature. Sanz (3) was successful in 1848 with Don Francisco de Quevedo, a piece which on account of its good plot, strong characterisation and vigorous style gave promise of a great

(1) La Literatura Española en el Siglo XIX. Blanco García. (Madrid 1909) Vol.I., p.197.

(2) Antonio Gil y Zárate (1793 - 1861).

(3) Eulogio Florentino Sanz (1825 - 1881).

future for its author. Unfortunately this was not fulfilled. In 1858 La Avellaneda⁽¹⁾ wrote Baltasar, a work which revealed very clearly the truly poetic temperament of the authoress and her depth of lyrical fervour.

Thus we reach the end of the glorious period of the Romantic drama in Spain. In the productions of this movement there were, of course, faults and glaring ones at that. Yet, even while criticising and deploring its faults, let us always keep in mind the important fact that it was due to the dramatists of this school that unnatural classical restraints were banished and that national freedom, inspiration and genius were restored to the Spanish stage.

There was no place for the relation of the true facts of life, and imagination ran riot. Many of the characters presented were markedly sentimental, and the picture of the troubles and trials through which they passed played on the emotions of the members of the audience. Little appeal was made either to their reason or to their sense of humour, at least not intentionally. Characterisation was usually very

(1) Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda (1814 - 1873).

P A R T 2.

CHAPTER II.MORATINIAN COMEDY (1800-1850).

It is frequently the case that supporters of reactionary movements, whether religious, political or literary, go to extremes, and the supporters of the Spanish Romantic Drama proved no exception to this tendency. Many of the works produced, especially some of the lesser known ones, had badly constructed, melodramatic plots, full of unlikely happenings and extraordinary mysteries. There was no place for the relation of the true facts of life, and imagination ran riot. Many of the characters presented were mawkishly sentimental, and the recital of the troubles and trials through which they passed played on the emotions of the members of the audience. Little appeal was made either to their reason or to their sense of humour, at least not intentionally. Characterisation was usually very

(1) Particularly Rivas and Zorrilla.

poor, and the authors' psychological studies were inadequate. There was action in abundance, far in excess of what was necessary. One feels that better results might often have been obtained if authors had concentrated less on action and more on the characters themselves. Frequently the verse form of the dramas was spoilt by floridity of style, declamation, and verbosity. These faults indeed are apparent even in passages from the works of the leading dramatists⁽¹⁾ of the period. In the end, the extravagance, the violent passion, the poverty of the style of many of those Romantic dramas wearied the audience, who came to desire something more reasonable and more true to life.

Those members of the public turned their attention to the comedy of customs, written on the same lines as the works of Leandro Fernández de Moratín. Such comedies were successfully produced during the first thirty-four years of the nineteenth century, before the Romantic drama flourished in Spain. This type of work continued to be very popular with certain sections of the community

Romantic writers. All the same, the comedy writers and lyrical beauty, found in the works of the Romantics.

(1) Particularly Rivas and Zorrilla.

even during the years of enthusiasm for Romanticism. As a proof of this, we note that Bretón de los Herreros had about thirteen comedies presented between the years 1834 and 1837, the period when Romantic dramas were so successful in Spain. Naturally enough, when Romanticism began to lose favour, crowds flocked to the theatres to see these simple, realistic pieces which were, to a great extent, the forerunners of modern Spanish comedy.

Some of the writers of these comedies were slightly influenced by the ideas of the Romantic movement, and others were quite definitely opposed to them. Yet we may consider all these authors together; for, irrespective of Romantic or Classical tendencies, they all followed the path of Moratín and wrote simple comedies whose purpose was to amuse and instruct. Their works were truthful and natural, with little action, but possessed of humour and characterisation, logical and sensible. This type of play showed many of the qualities which the exaggerated Romantic drama lacked and proved a welcome relief after the ridiculous extravagances of some of the Romantic writers. At the same time, the passion, vigour, and lyrical beauty, found in the works of the Romantics,

were absent. But these comedies were very typically Spanish, brimming over with national wit and spirit.

Moratin himself, although his death did not occur until 1828, wrote no other original comedy after El Sí de las Niñas in 1806. Yet there was no scarcity of authors to admire and imitate his works. They produced comedies which may not have been successful, but which nevertheless served to maintain the interest of the Spanish public in this type of piece. According to a contemporary critic, "En pos de Moratin vemos "marchar un número respetable de composiciones que, si "bien no pueden las más rivalizar con el gran maestro, "honran y no poco nuestras tablas." (1)

The first comedy of merit was Lo que Puede un Empleo. It was written by Martínez de la Rosa (2) and was successfully presented in Cadiz in the year 1812. Of course, this author is known as one of the pioneers of Romanticism in Spain; but before 1834, the date of his important Romantic drama, La Conjuración de Venecia,

(1) Artículos de Crítica Literaria y Artística. Larra. (Madrid 1923) Vol.II., p.47.

(2) Francisco Martínez de la Rosa (1787 - 1862).

he had on several occasions held the attention of audiences with comedies written in the style of Moratín. The first venture of Martínez de la Rosa was successful enough at the time, but its popularity did not last. The dialogue was good, but the action was puerile. The main point of interest with regard to this comedy is the fact that the author attempted to write it in prose, as Moratín had done in some⁽¹⁾ of his comedies. Martínez de la Rosa succeeded in carrying out his plan, but he found the task so difficult and the result so far from his liking, that in his later works he had recourse to the octosyllabic 'romance', which was popular with his master and had been originally the traditional measure of the old Spanish legends. It is important to notice that at this period prose was not in favour with authors of comedies. Few writers attempted to use it, and almost⁽²⁾ all the really successful works were written in verse.

(1) Moratín wrote only two of his original works in prose - La Comedia Nueva (1792) and El Sí de las Niñas (1805).

(2) With the exception of A la Vejez Viruelas (1824) by Bretón de los Herreros.

The two best works of Martínez de la Rosa in this genre were La Niña en Casa y la Madre en la Máscara⁽¹⁾ (1821) and later, Los Celos Infundados (1832). The former is generally considered to be his best comedy and is worth reading; indeed it might act pleasantly enough at the present day. The author wrote this piece in order to point a moral which was made extremely prominent throughout. The over-emphasis upon the didactic purpose was one of the faults which detracted greatly from Martínez de la Rosa's value as a writer of comedies. The moral aim was too much in the foreground, and the members of the audience were instructed rather than amused. The object of the work is to convince neglectful mothers that they act foolishly in not supervising their young daughters. The evil consequences which may result from such thoughtless behaviour, are shown in the hope that a reformation may be effected in the conduct of heedless mothers. The piece is good; the plan is well conceived and carried through. One of the qualities which makes this comedy stand out above the

(1) An adaptation of this comedy was made in French and was quite successful in France.

others of Martínez de la Rosa is the characterisation. Some of the persons are carefully studied, as for example, Inés, the innocent young girl, Don Teodoro, the villain, and the mother, who in the end repents of her neglect and carelessness. The author shows that he possesses a good knowledge of his fellow men, and the comedy attracts because of its human sentiments. The production is that of a cultured man who has shown good technique and skilful execution. The style is natural and the dialogue is bright and amusing.

Martínez de la Rosa's other comedy, Los Celos Infundados, was also written in close imitation of Moratín. Indeed in some of the ideas and some of the scenes there appears to be quite a definite resemblance between this piece and the eighteenth century El Viejo y la Niña. The work deals with the problem of an old man, Don Anselmo, married to a young and attractive wife of whom he is intensely jealous and whom he constantly suspects of infidelity - no new subject for a Spanish comedy. We are shown how, by means of a trick played upon him, the stupid old man is brought to realise his folly. The piece is well conceived and worked out. It is bright and lively

with a few good dramatic scenes and a strong conclusion. In this comedy Martínez de la Rosa reveals a knowledge of the theatre and its requirements. After reading Los Celos Infundados, no doubt can remain in our mind about the wisdom of the author's choice in abandoning prose for verse in his comedies. The style is very successful, the versification being good and the dialogue natural.

It is apparent that Martínez de la Rosa was a close follower of Moratín. He emphasised the didactic note and brought to the front the lesson which he wished to teach. His moralising tendency was very pronounced, and in this lay one of his greatest defects. The plots of his comedies were sometimes excessively simple; yet they were generally well adapted and the interest was sustained despite the slightness of the action. The characters were fairly well presented, but the psychology was not at all deep, and consequently we have no clear-cut picture of the persons who appear before us. There was an absence of that spirited humour and brightness which might have been expected in comedies of this type. His wit, however, was always in excellent taste, and there was

never any trace of coarseness in his works. The language, the dialogue, and the versification, showed elegance and refinement. The comedies were those of a man of talent, breeding, and good taste, discreet and reserved. "Todo está en su lugar, nada desentona; "todo arguye talento; se respira bien, se vive entre "gentes de buena crianza....."(1) We agree with the eminent critic when he makes this statement no less than when he goes on to say that Martínez de la Rosa's contributions to this branch of literature were not satisfactory. Because of his lack of inspiration, of psychological penetration, and humour, the author failed to make any profound, lasting impression with his comedies.

The other author who held the interest of the theatre-going public at the same period as Martínez de la Rosa was Gorostiza.(2) He composed some lyric poetry, made translations from the French theatre, and remodelled two works of 'Siglo de Oro' dramatists; but he is known principally as an author of comedies. Gorostiza's first

(1) Autores Dramáticos Contemporáneos. (Madrid 1882)
Article by Menéndez y Pelayo. Vol.II., p.17.

(2) Manuel Eduardo de Gorostiza (1789 - 1851).

original work appeared in 1818 and was favourably received by the public. It was called Indulgencia para Todos and was written in the Moratinian style. The moral aim of the piece was perfectly clear and obvious throughout. The idea that any human being had the right to set himself up as the inexorable judge of the actions of others was condemned. In this first work we are introduced to Gorostiza's favourite method of procedure with regard to the plot of his comedies. He causes several of the characters to band together in order to trick and ridicule one of the other persons in the play who possesses some special vice. Eventually the victim of the deceit comes to realise his foolishness and is thus cured of his fault. This type of plot closely resembles that of the 'comedia de figurón' and in this respect Gorostiza has followed Spanish tradition. The device occurs frequently in his comedies, so frequently, indeed, that it becomes almost the hallmark of Gorostiza's works and instead of appreciating the ingenuity of the method, we become bored by the repetition. There are scenes in this piece which are well presented and very amusing. They make it clear that this author did possess

(2) El mal del tradidor (1811), adaptation of a French play
Le mal du traduire by Scribe and Mélesville.

the gift of creating humorous situations. One other point of particular importance in dealing with La Indulgencia para Todos is that the comedy was written in verse, but not merely the octosyllabic 'romance'. New metrical combinations were introduced, and Gorostiza made use of 'redondillas', 'quintillas', and 'décimas', in order to add variety to his versification. All this was done rather unskillfully perhaps, but it was an innovation at such an early date in the nineteenth century; and it remained for other authors⁽¹⁾ to take up this idea and to perfect it.

Gorostiza wrote other comedies of which the most important and most interesting was Contigo Pan y Cebolla. This was produced in 1833 and was evidently a popular success. It was also highly praised by Larra in his dramatic criticism. (Incidentally, it may be said of Larra that no critic of the period was better qualified than he to express an opinion about this particular type of dramatic work. Two years previously he had himself essayed a comedy⁽²⁾ in this same style which, although

(1) E.g. Bretón de los Herreros in Marcela (1831).

(2) No más Mostrador (1831), adaptation of a French play Les Adieux aux Comptoirs by Scribe and Mélesville.

not original, was successful. He was a great enthusiast for the theatre and wrote criticisms of many pieces as they appeared. In the sphere of the drama it is always interesting and instructive to know exactly the opinion of contemporaries with regard to productions of the day.) This later comedy of Gorostiza ridicules and condemns the extravagant, Romantic interpretation of love where the poor victim fondly imagines that all will turn out happily, and, ignorant of the hardships she is to endure, says to her penurious lover, 'Contigo pan y cebolla'. The story is well told, but we notice that Gorostiza has again used his favourite device, for several of the characters conspire in order to bring the misguided heroine to her senses. Some of the scenes are extremely well presented. Indeed a few of the parts are so good that they could bear comparison with the work of almost any other Spanish writer of comedies. Unfortunately there are great inequalities in this play. Although at times it reaches a very high level, it possesses passages which are ordinary and others which are coarse and in bad taste. The style on the whole is good and the versification sound. The dialogue is

bright and well sustained, and the action is developed and carried to a successful conclusion with originality, verve and wit.

Gorostiza's works reflect contemporary life and social conditions and from the historical point of view are interesting and valuable. With their help we can reconstruct parts of the intimate life of the generation which he describes. The moral lessons he wishes to teach are always well defined, although his comedies are usually pieces which amuse and divert. His characterisation is good without being either deep or subtle, but on occasion the people he portrays are caricatured. His plots are stereotyped and often his versification is poor. Menéndez y Pelayo says, "Nadie más pobre que Gorostiza en "la intriga, nadie más prosaico y más sin jugo ni "color en los versos."⁽¹⁾ This critic definitely places⁽²⁾ Martínez de la Rosa above Gorostiza as a writer of Moratinian comedy. Comparison, however, is difficult, for it almost seems as if each possesses the qualities which

(1) Autores Dramáticos Contemporáneos (Madrid 1882).
Article by Menéndez y Pelayo. Vol.II., p.17.

(2) Do. Do. Do. Do.

the other lacks. Gorostiza is perhaps the better equipped of the two, because in spite of his faults he does possess more natural wit and more vigour, qualities which are essential in a writer of comedies. In conclusion, it might be sufficient to say that neither of these authors was really great, and that neither of them made much contribution towards the development of comedy. Nevertheless both La Rosa and Gorostiza helped to keep the art of Moratín in practice and thus held the way open for great authors who were to follow.

Several other writers of the period⁽¹⁾, some of whom were famous in a very different sphere of dramatic production, made efforts to produce comedies in this style, but none of them met with success. It was not until the appearance of Breton de los Herreros⁽²⁾, the finest writer of comedy of the period, that this type of Spanish play came into its own again. Even in his boyhood he found it a very easy matter to write verses and produced a certain amount of lyric poetry. He also translated or

(1) Rivas and Hartzenbusch.

(2) Manuel Breton de los Herreros (1796 - 1873).

adapted many foreign plays, being forced like many other Spanish dramatists to perform this inglorious task on account of poverty. From his very early years he had decided leanings towards theatrical productions, and, as we study his life and works, we conclude that this genre was the supreme literary love of his life. When Bretón de los Herreros was about twenty years of age, it happened that Moratín's works fell into his hands. They were read, studied and much admired. Indeed, they made so deep an impression on the young man that he decided there and then to take this type of comedy as his model. Bretón, therefore, set about writing a work in the Moratinian style which was completed in 1817, but which was not produced until seven years later. This comedy, A la Vejez Viruelas, achieved a fair amount of success, of which Moratín himself may have heard during his ill-health and old age. There was nothing original and little of importance to note in this piece, which consisted of three acts written in prose and was a skilful imitation of El Sí de las Niñas. Bretón made no clean break with the past, but continued in the tradition of Moratín, his characters, ideas, and

purpose being very similar to those of the eighteenth century writer. It was unfortunate that Bretón chose to write his first original comedy in prose, because the quality of his prose style was inferior. Yet even at this early stage of Bretón's career, his genius is revealed as more lively, more natural, more popular, less cultured and aloof than that of Moratín.

His next important comedy A Madrid Me Vuelvo (1828) was written in the same style. It was purely Moratinian in inspiration with its satire and its didactic purpose. In this work Bretón gave us two moral lessons; he opposed the idea that a country life is necessarily a paradise, and secondly he condemned the imposition of the paternal will in marriages. However, despite the similarity, the comic element in Bretón's work was much stronger and the whole atmosphere of the piece brighter and more natural. As the author apparently realised that his efforts to imitate Moratín's prose style were futile, he resolved to write this comedy⁽¹⁾ in verse. The traditional octosyllabic 'romance' was used by Bretón, who employed only one

(1) Los Dos Sobrinos (1825) was really Bretón's first comedy in verse.

single assonance in each act of the work. His versification was carried through with great skill and success. It is evident that the writer showed wisdom in adopting verse as his medium of expression.

Shortly afterwards Bretón was inspired to strike out along new paths of his own. The work which first showed to the public the author's new ideas was Marcela, o ¿a cuál de los Tres?, a three act comedy which was produced with great success in the year 1831. This marks the commencement of Bretón's great productive period. His pieces are no longer mere imitations of those of Moratín, but the dramatist sets the stamp of his own genius upon each individual comedy. The type is now no longer Moratinian, but Bretonian, and the majority of his later works are developed on these new lines. The moral aspect is still prominent, but the main interest centres rather upon the picture of the society of the day, realistically and amusingly presented. Bretón excels in the superficial but skilful portrayal of the characters of the members of the Spanish bourgeoisie, in the irony and roguish wit of the dialogue, and in the masterly, easy verse in which the comedies are written. The plot of

Marcela itself is extremely simple, being the story of a pretty little widow who is courted by three suitors, each of whom is finally rejected on account of some special peculiarity. It is apparent that only a skillful writer could produce such an excellent comedy from so simple an action and make it popular with an audience, whose usual demand was that a theatrical work should be full of movement and intrigue. In this piece of Breton the comic element is very strong, some of the scenes sparkling with humour and being almost farcical in character. The work is a skit on the manners of the middle class and is full of gaiety and mischief, reminiscent of the spirit pervading the 'sainetes' of Ramón de la Cruz in the previous century. The characters in Marcela are well drawn, and, although the study of their foibles is not very deep, yet they appear to us as real, living people. We have no difficulty in remembering the heroine herself, who is a serious type of person, and the three lovers, each of whom is amusing in his own way.

With regard to the form of the comedy, we have an innovation which was previously attempted by Gorostiza in his comedy La Indulgencia para Todos, and which is

perfected by Breton. Instead of writing his work in prose or in octosyllabic 'romances', the usual forms of comedy at that time, the author employs various metres. These he manipulates with great skill both in this piece and in most⁽¹⁾ of his later ones, showing that he has a profound knowledge of the old Spanish metrical forms. The result is admirable, for the verse is easy, pleasant and natural, and the versification is rich and varied, the diction is elegant and the expression apt. Breton has an occasional happy ingenuity of phrase which makes certain of his sayings almost proverbial. The public loved his epigrammatic lines and learned by heart many of his attractive 'redondillas'. The verse used by this author might compare in ease and facility with that employed in some of the great Romantic dramas, not of course from the point of view of the tragic or passionate note but with regard to facility and spontaneity. As Alonso Cortés says, "Por lo que hace a la versificación, ni a 'Zorrilla cede Breton en facilidad. Hablando en verso, "parece que los personajes de Breton no podrían decir las

(1) A few of his later works were written in prose but none of these were very good comedies, e.g. La Independencia, a 4 act comedy in prose (1844).

"cosas más que como las dicen, sin que esa fluidez
 "llegue a dar en el prosaísmo, porque se encargan de
 "evitarlo la abundosa variedad de rima y el donaire de
 "la expresión, bien alejada de la vulgaridad."⁽¹⁾
 Bretón really freed comedy from conventions with regard
 to form and added considerably to its worth.

Several other comedies were written by him on
 exactly the same lines as this popular success. Indeed
 some⁽²⁾ of the pieces had almost the same plot as Marcela.
 Yet in spite of the similarity of action, the other plays
 were always much appreciated, as the characters were
 varied, the dialogue sparkled and the verses revealed
 fresh beauties.

El Pelo de la Dehesa⁽³⁾ (1840) is a very pleasant
 example of a Bretonian comedy. The story is based on
 the arrangement of a marriage between a spoilt, charming
 beauty of Madrid and an uncultured, wealthy rustic.

(1) Prólogo al Teatro de Bretón de los Herreros. N. A.
 Cortés. (Madrid 1928) p.XVII.

(2) Un Tercero en Discordia (1833). Un Novio para la
 Niña (1834).

(3) This work might be considered as a 'comedia de
 figurón'.

Many of the scenes in the play are amusing and even farcical, and the standard of versification is maintained. Don Frutos, the chief character, is well portrayed. At the beginning of the comedy he appears to us as the awkward country swain who continually makes blunders and says stupid things. Gradually he becomes exasperated by the constant criticism and correction of his actions. Eventually he breaks silence and tells his prospective mother-in-law exactly what he thinks.

"Dejen a un hombre sencillo,
 "que, al cabo, no es una fiera,
 "manejar a su manera
 "el tenedor y el cuchillo.
 "No me mire usted al soslayo.
 "Quiero que el amor me mande...
 "y no una suegra." (1)

Later he asserts himself still further, and far from being a figure of fun, he shows himself to be a clear-headed, far-seeing, generous man, capable of dealing with all the difficulties of the situation.

If Marcela was the beginning of Bretón's greatness, Muérete ¡y Verás! (1837) was the culminating point of his

(1) El Pelo de la Dehesa. Act III. Scene 6. ll. 271-277.

success. This comedy was more serious in tone and more dramatic in style than the majority of the author's other works. It is possible that the doctrines of Romanticism, which were still popular in that year, were responsible for the difference in atmosphere. The moral lesson is perfectly clear throughout and is indicated by the title and the three concluding lines of the piece.

"Para aprender a vivir...
 "No hay cosa como morir...
 "Y resucitar después."

The idea is well worked out, and the scene in which the supposed dead man comes to life again is very striking and might almost form part of a Romantic drama. There is a considerable amount of humour in the comedy despite its graver note. The scene⁽¹⁾ in which Don Pablo overhears himself discussed by his friends who presume him to be dead, is amusing and natural. The characterisation is good, particularly that of the two women, Jacinta, shallow, fickle and worldly minded, in strong contrast to her sister, Isabel, steadfast, unselfish, and faithful. In this comedy the feeling is deeper, and a more profound

(1) Muérete iy Verás! Act III, Scene 4.

knowledge of human nature is shown. The style is easy and pleasant, and the versification is excellent. Several of the passages impress by their simple sincerity and beauty, especially some of the speeches⁽¹⁾ made by the heroine Isabel. This is certainly one of the author's best works and one that will last, for although the story deals with nineteenth century manners, there is a depth and a truth about it that make a universal appeal.

Later on in his career Bretón had trouble with both critics and public. At times his plays were not so successful, and one short piece⁽²⁾ in particular was very badly received. The author took fright and apparently seriously considered the advisability of giving up dramatic writing altogether. But, fortunately, on the advice of his friends, and through his own great love for the theatre, he decided to continue his labours, although never again did he regain his old confidence in his powers. Yet he did write some other good comedies, the last of which appeared in 1867, six years before his death. Of

(1) In Act II., Scene 14, and again in Act III., Scene 11.

(2) La Ponchada (1840).

his later works La Escuela de Matrimonio (1852) was outstanding, for it showed a development in Breton's art which was to bear fruit afterwards. Here were apparent good study of contemporary customs, portrayal of character, and a very definite moral lesson. The story was concerned with marriage and the danger of unlawful love affairs. Breton preached against divorce which he regarded as a menace to society, and of which he strongly disapproved. This comedy was on a different plane from any of the others and resembled in many ways El Hombre de Mundo (1845), which had been written by Ventura de la Vega. It really pointed the way forward towards the development of 'alta comedia', which was to establish itself shortly.

Breton's fecundity was amazing. He possessed the gift of improvisation to an extraordinary degree, and he wrote comedies with great facility. In this respect he was surpassed only by the immortal Lope de Vega himself. He wrote one hundred and three original works, translated sixty-two and remodelled ten. The author's chief desire was to please and satisfy the public for which he wrote. Therefore at different times in his career he chose

subjects connected with questions of the moment in the hope that they would make appeal to his audience. He composed comedies dealing with politics, and he introduced into his pieces characters which would interest the public, depicting in turn, the soldier, the journalist, and the member of parliament. Breton also tried his skill at all types of dramatic production, classical tragedy, Romantic drama, comedy of philosophy, comedy of magic, and even attempted 'zarzuelas'. But he was not successful in any of these genres. He was so expert in his own particular sphere that he found great difficulty in adapting himself to any other dramatic type, and it is as a writer of comedies that the name of Breton de los Herreros is known in Spanish literature.

As was mentioned before, Breton began his literary career by imitating Moratin's works, and his first comedies were written according to the pattern of the eighteenth century author. From the very beginning, however, there were differences between the two. Breton's action and composition were poorer; but, on the other hand, his humour was gay and mischievous, his

irony was usually kindly, and the whole spirit of his comedies was popular and picturesque. Although continuing in the tradition of his master, he created a new atmosphere in his pieces. Later the difference was even more accentuated when Breton created a type of dramatic production which was peculiarly his own. In Bretonian comedy there was generally a didactic purpose, but it was subordinate to the realistic painting of middle class society of the day. It reflected the customs, the events, the opinions, and the ideas of Breton's generation and serves to-day as a historical document of the intimate facts of social conditions and family life during the first part of the nineteenth century. Breton's power of observation was acute, and all that he saw was reproduced with truth and skill. The characters in the comedies, mostly members of the Madrid bourgeoisie, were not well studied, being roughly drawn and sometimes even caricatured. They were, however, always sufficiently detailed for us to picture them as real people.

Breton's verse style was consistently excellent. His diction was good, and the language used by his

(1) Breton defended this idea in 1837, when he made his speech on entering the Spanish Academy.

characters was exactly right. He wrote in metres of varied types, being convinced⁽¹⁾ that this was the correct procedure in comedy. Bretón employed verse in his works as easily and fluently as any modern playwright would use prose, and we find that his characters spoke their thoughts quite naturally in metre. The dialogue was interesting, bright, and witty, and was one of the most satisfactory features of his works.

Bretón of course has his faults. His characterisation is superficial, and there is little depth or philosophy in most of his work. His comedies are more the product of intuition than of reflective observation. He depended too much on improvisation and wrote with too great facility. He may also be criticised for poverty of invention in his plots, for, as has already been mentioned, he frequently uses almost the same idea for several comedies. Nevertheless most of these criticisms are not particularly relevant when one considers that they are made against a writer whose aim is merely to amuse. One cannot have and one does not expect great depth or

(1) Bretón defended this idea in 1837, when he made his speech on entering the Spanish Academy.

great passion in a writer of witty comedies. He has so many qualities to recommend him, his realism, his wit, his genial irony, his splendid dialogue, and varied versification, that these far outweigh all the criticisms made against him.

The whole work of Bretón de los Herreros marks him as the undoubted master of Spanish comedy at this period. He is a follower of Moratín, but in spirit he links up with the great popular dramatists of the past, with Ramón de la Cruz and even with some of the immortals of the 'Siglo de Oro'. His influence is felt on the whole later development of Spanish comedy, even up to the present day. Indeed the resemblance between the Quintero brothers⁽¹⁾ and Bretón is occasionally very marked. There is the same observation of customs with, frequently, some underlying moral lesson, the same gay mischievous raillery and popular spirit, briskness of dialogue and even resemblance in phraseology. Bretón de los Herreros paved the way for kindred spirits who were to follow in his footsteps, and he handed on to them his own version of comedy, full of gaiety, vitality, real Spanish wit, and popular

(1) Los hermanos Quintero (1871 -)
(1873 -)

feeling.

The author who took second place as a writer of comedies at this period was Ventura de la Vega.⁽¹⁾ It is generally admitted that he was excelled only by Bretón de los Herreros, who possessed many qualities which his rival lacked, but who was hardly the equal of Vega with regard to good taste and sober elegance of style. At the beginning of his literary career, this dramatist translated or adapted⁽²⁾ many French plays, a great number of which originally were written by Scribe. We cannot help wondering whether Vega persisted in this type of work through actual necessity or innate indolence. On the other hand, of course, new ideas and fresh plots may not have come easily to him, although he evidently could work with no difficulty once the ideas had been presented to his mind. At any rate, the translations of the French plays were excellently done and showed that the author possessed a thorough knowledge of French and Spanish. Frequently by the slight modification of certain of the

(1) Ventura de la Vega (1807 - 1865).

(2) Ventura de la Vega's translations and adaptations numbered about seventy in all.

characters, and by the introduction of some national humour, Vega's version came to be almost like a Spanish comedy, and occasionally even superior to the original. From one point of view this was quite satisfactory, because money flowed into Vega's purse with a minimum of effort on his part; but he was making no real name for himself in Spanish letters. At last, however, "En septiembre de 1845 redimió su buen nombre con El Hombre de Mundo cuya gloria, con haber sido tan grande, va creciendo con los años ..."⁽¹⁾ This piece was a comedy of four acts in verse which was presented in 1845 and was very successful.

Although Ventura de la Vega was responsible for so much dramatic translation and adaptation, he wrote remarkably little creative work - only three⁽²⁾ of his pieces being absolutely original. Vega's best work was the above mentioned comedy El Hombre de Mundo. His only other production of value was his swan-song, La Muerte de César, a tragedy which appeared in 1865 after years of

(1) La Literatura Española en el Siglo XIX. Blanco García. (Madrid 1909) Vol.I., p.319.

(2) El Hombre de Mundo (1845). Don Fernando el de Antequera (1847). La Muerte de César (1865).

painstaking labour. Those two works form the slender claim which Vega has to recognition, but their worth was great.

Of those two productions there seems to be little doubt as to which is the better. At least the popular verdict was given to the comedy, and the critics appear to be mostly agreed upon this point. One notable exception is Juan Valera, whose personal opinion is given in favour of the tragedy, La Muerte de César. He draws attention to the many fine qualities the work possesses, praises the realism in the study of the historical period, the splendid characterisation and the originality of the piece as compared with the tragedies of Shakespeare and Voltaire. The critic says, "Nos importa, con todo, hacer "notar el esmero y el tino que hay en todo en La Muerte de "César: en el estudio de la época en que ocurre la acción "y en la pintura de los caracteres, cuyos rasgos principales están fielmente calcados de la historia, corregidos "con mano firme por la crítica, e iluminados y puestos "luego gallardamente de realce con los colores y la luz "de la poesía."⁽¹⁾ These statements are all true, and

(1) Autores Dramáticos Contemporáneos. (Madrid 1882)
Article by Juan Valera. Vol.I., p.267.

this tragedy of Ventura de la Vega may be considered as the finest of the whole nineteenth century with the exception of Virginia (1853) by Tamayo y Baus⁽¹⁾.

Despite all this and despite the fine characterisation, the beauty of the verses, and the elegance of the style, it appears as if this type of dramatic production was not suited to the natural talent of Vega, who was much more at home in comedy. One is, therefore, in agreement with Valera when he remarks later in his criticism, "Sería audacia y desafuero arrojar El Hombre de Mundo del "superior puesto de honor que por fallo del público le "corresponde."⁽²⁾ Accordingly our concern is with Ventura de la Vega as a writer of comedy only, making special reference to El Hombre de Mundo.

Vega lived and wrote when Romanticism flourished in Spain. Normally he might have been expected to support the ideas of the new movement, but he was not at any time a real Romantic. He must have read and seen all the important Romantic dramas, for he was a great lover of the

(1) Manuel Tamayo y Baus (1829 - 1898).

(2) Autores Dramáticos Contemporáneos. (Madrid 1882)
Article by Juan Valera, Vol.I. p.267.

theatre; and yet he remained singularly unaffected by their doctrines. Occasionally the author did show some traces of Romanticism, as in his earlier lyric poetry and in his unsuccessful drama, Don Fernando el de Antequera. Yet, on the whole, he had little sympathy with writers of Romantic dramas. He ridiculed their ideas and mocked at their exaggerations. For example in El Hombre de Mundo, mention was made of a splendid verse drama with a thrilling scene in which the lover poisons some one or other,

"Es tremenda aquella escena
"en que el amante envenena...."(1)

and with another part where two heretics, husband and wife, are burned at the stake, after each has recited a sonnet!

"¡Pues digo,
"y cuando van a quemar
"los dos herejes...marido
"y mujer! ¡Y cada cual
"dice al subir a la hoguera,
"un soneto!" (2)

(1) El Hombre de Mundo. Act III. Scene 16, ll. 858-859.

(2) Do. Do. Act IV. Scene 6, ll. 149-154.

Vega's attitude to Romanticism was later quite definite. He did nothing much to hinder its progress, but he did nothing to further it. He went his own way and wrote works exactly as his temperament prompted him to do. Vega represented the classic spirit in this Romantic period. He was really a Neo-classic faced with Romanticism. His knowledge of Greek and Latin literatures was extensive, and he had studied the Spanish 'Siglo de Oro' dramatists. But the author whom he most admired was Moratín. Ventura de la Vega decided to follow the example of this great eighteenth century writer, and we have, as a result, the important comedy El Hombre de Mundo. Vega was obsessed by his own canons of beauty and of fitness, and he had a natural aversion to excess and violence in his works. Restraint, method, and orderliness were the ideals of his art. His plays were polished and pruned, until their style was almost perfect in its elegance. Valera praises him saying, "Por rectitud de "juicio, por acendradísimo buen gusto y por primorosa "elegancia de dicción, nos parece que supera a todos, "desempeñando así en aquella revolución literaria el útil "y conveniente papel de conservador de las tradiciones de

"la escuela clásica, tan ilustrada por Lista, Moratín, Gallego, Hermosilla y Quintana."⁽¹⁾

Like Moratín, Ventura de la Vega had a didactic purpose in mind when he wrote his comedy. Fortunately, however, his moral lesson is not made too obvious, for he does not constantly preach against the particular evil he is condemning. Instead he develops the simple situations with ease and certainty until a state of domestic unhappiness exists, and thus he points the moral.

"Es que tu vida pasada
viene a envenenarlo todo.
Pon en olvido profundo
esa experiencia fatal;
que no basta pensar mal
para ser hombre de bien."⁽²⁾

All this is carried through so amusingly and cleverly, with so much wit, gaiety and irony that the members of the audience are hardly aware of the underlying moral lesson. The action is simple, extremely probable and natural, and well worked out. Vega proves himself to

(1) Autores Dramáticos Contemporáneos (Madrid 1882).
Article by Juan Valera. Vol.I., p.279.

(2) El Hombre de Mundo. Act IV. Scene 19. ll. 628-633.

be a skilful dramatist who makes the most of each simple incident and twist of the plot and never allows the interest to flag for a single moment. His theatrical technique is good.

The dramatist's powers of observation are acute, and his psychology is subtle. The people in his comedy are only seven in number, but each one is carefully studied and well presented. Clever contrasts are made between two pairs of the characters, between Antonito and Juan and between the two sisters Emilia and Clara. The husband and wife are persons one might meet in ordinary life. The other characters are equally well drawn. Antonito, the fresh, ingenuous lover of Emilia, cannot fail to be amusing. Juan, the villain of the piece, is unbelievably mean in some of his actions towards his old friend Luis, and his impudence is boundless. At the end of the play, when his scheme to seduce Clara has failed, he makes his farewell indicating by an 'aside' his intention of returning to try his fortunes at a later date.

"(No es extraño
"que esté tan arisca ahora.
"Lleva tres meses....) ¡Señora! (1)
"(Volveré dentro de un año.)"

(1) El Hombre de Mundo. Act IV. Scene 18. ll. 597-600.

The two servants Ramón and Benita are real persons and there are several amusing scenes in which they appear, either together⁽¹⁾, or else with another⁽²⁾ of the characters.

The comedy is written in verse (mainly octosyllabic) and its style is excellent, being correct, concise and polished. In spite of the fact that Vega had spent much time on the form of this dramatic production, the result is surprisingly natural. His versification is easy, and his style is graceful. If we were to try to select only one quality which we wished to associate with this author, we would probably choose as the most prominent one, 'elegance of form'. One thing of which Vega appears to be particularly fond in his comedy is the use of 'asides'. This is his favourite method of revealing to the audience the real thoughts of his characters - a clumsy, and not always successful practice in his case, and one which he employs excessively. There occurs one particular scene⁽³⁾ where each of the four characters on

(1) El Hombre de Mundo. Act II., Scene 3.

(2) Do. Do. Act II., Scene 10.

(3) Act III., Scene 13. Out of the last 38 lines of this scene 16 are spoken as 'asides'.

the stage uses 'asides' frequently, and the device is very much over-worked. The dialogue in this comedy is brisk, lively, sparkling, and adds greatly to the charm of the piece. The conversation between the characters is natural and interest is more readily maintained by the absence of long monologues.

The comedy has a kind of negative perfection, and may be criticised for what it lacks, rather than for what it possesses. Its moral value is not high, nor does its treatment show much vigour, strength, or passion. Even the verses, in spite of their ease and fluency, are without inspiration and beauty. Nevertheless the comedy was considered as a worthy contribution to the dramatic work of the period, both because the work was valuable in itself, and also because it helped to prepare the way for comedies of a somewhat similar type which were to follow later in the century. Here is one critical appreciation of El Hombre de Mundo which sums up its qualities accurately - "Se distingue esta comedia - preludio de la alta comedia - por la observación de las pasiones y caracteres, por el enredo verosímil y por las escenas y el diálogo chispeantes, escritas con perfecto conocimiento de la

"técnica teatral."⁽¹⁾

Comedies were also produced by Rubí⁽²⁾ who lived during the Romantic period in Spanish literature, and who began to write after most of the great outpourings of the dramatic art of Romanticism had ceased in Spain. This author first made a name for himself in Madrid as a lyric poet. Then his interest turned towards the theatre, and he produced several works in collaboration with other dramatists. Finally in 1840 he wrote a comedy Del Mal el Menos which was his first venture without a collaborator. This piece was well received by the public and by the critics, and Rubí started off on a successful literary career. He was a very productive author and composed about one hundred dramatic works in all. Like many other Spanish writers, he had the gift of improvisation, and wrote with ease and speed. It is said that he completed one of his popular successes, La Trenza de Sus Cabellos⁽³⁾ (1849) within the space of eight days. His productivity

(1) Historia de la Literatura Española. Hurtado y Palencia. (Madrid 1921) p.942.

(2) Tomás Rodríguez y Díaz Rubí (1817 - 1890).

(3) Autores Dramáticos Contemporáneos. (Madrid 1882)
Article by J. O. Picón. Vol.II., p.80.

was due partly to his natural facility and partly to necessity, for he lived solely by his pen until the year 1853 when he entered politics.

Once Rubí had made his decision to devote himself to the theatre, he settled down to work in earnest and tried his skill writing many different kinds of plays. He produced several historical⁽¹⁾ works, some tragic, and others in a much lighter vein. But most of these, composed somewhat in the style of Scribe, were rather fantastic and failed to give a real picture of the period dealt with. 'Sainetes' and imitations of the great 'Siglo de Oro' dramatists were not outside the author's sphere. Rubí, however, was best known for his comedies with which he gained great popularity among the audiences of his day. He was one of the most successful dramatists of the reign of Isabel II., although now most of his works have been forgotten.

In his 'comedias de costumbres' Rubí followed the example of Breton de los Herreros to a great extent. There were always, however, in the disciple's works

(1) Los Dos Validos (1842). Bandera Negra (1844). Isabel la Católica (1849).

traces of independence and originality. The author's purpose was to observe the society of his time, and to depict it in an amusing, ironical way, reproducing faithfully the problems, the ideas, and the interests of the Spanish people of the period. Rubí's comedies were merely the reflection of the life of the members of the audience which applauded him. Generally the plot was simple⁽¹⁾, and the action developed naturally in a way that both interested and amused the spectators. It was extremely important that the attention of the public should be held and that they should appreciate all the humour of the various situations; for then, unconsciously, they often caught a glimpse of the underlying moral lesson. But in the works of Rubí the didactic note was neither very deep nor very strong. The dramatist's main purpose was to paint a picture of contemporary society and to amuse and entertain his audience. The characters in Rubí's comedies are natural and well drawn, but few of them stand out very clearly. They are merely the common people of everyday life with their little foibles, their

(1) An exception is the plot of El Gran Filón which is swiftly moving and improbable.

likes and dislikes to distinguish them and nothing more. They make little impression on our minds and are soon forgotten.

The two least forgotten works of Rubí are La Rueda de la Fortuna (1843) and El Gran Filón (1874). The latter, which was very successful, is a three act comedy written in verse, condemning and ridiculing the political system. All the planning, plotting and scheming are revealed and the corruption of contemporary methods is laid bare. There is a strong element of caricature present, and one has the feeling that the author really enjoyed writing this work. The atmosphere of the comedy is bright and gay, abounding in epigram and clever repartee. There is little that is serious or deep in the work, and much that is ridiculous and improbable. Occasionally we have a scene⁽¹⁾ where there is an approach to sentiment, but very soon this sentimental note changes back to the brisk, merry, mocking one which is characteristic of the piece as a whole. Even the conclusion of the comedy is in this spirit. The chief character bids farewell in

(1) El Gran Filón. Act II., Scene 10. Act III., Scene 6.

a most amusing speech in the course of which he says,

"Me acuso, Señor, me acuso,
 "de haber sido un poco audaz.
 "Fuí audaz y no cumplí
 "con vuestros preceptos santos;
 "pero Señor ... ¿donde hay ¡tantos!
 "repararéis sólo en mí?" (1)

The plot in El Gran Filón is complicated. There is the political aspect of the story, the love interest, and the mysterious question of the real identity⁽²⁾ of the heroine. In addition there are other small threads which require to be very carefully worked into the main action. There is a great deal of movement in this comedy, and the spectator's interest is held from the first act with its modest boarding-house setting, through the successes and failures of all the political intrigues, right to the end. Rubí possessed dramatic talent, and by means of the plot of El Gran Filón and his skilful development of the action, he was able to maintain his popularity with his audience.

The piece centres upon Jacinto, the chief character,

(1) El Gran Filón. Act III., Scene 20. ll. 947-952.

(2) This shows the influence of Romanticism.

who is at once the villain and hero of the comedy. He is a rascal, full of boastfulness and self confidence.

"Yo soy la ciencia encarnada
"del espíritu moderno."⁽¹⁾

It is he who brazenly pulls all the strings to make things go right for himself and for his friends. He is a rogue, yet so clever and ingenious that we cannot but like him. His repartee is most amusing, and his mother wit never fails him. When accused by Adán of treason, his answer comes,

"¿Qué traición? eso se llama ...
"se llama una evolución."⁽²⁾

and he continues, expressing his views on evolution, progress and tolerance. Jacinto has no compunction whatsoever in making a fool of old General Adán. Nevertheless he stands by his friends loyally and treats them generously. On the whole he is a very likeable rascal and one after the Spaniard's own heart. It is certain that this creation of Rubí must have delighted many of the theatre-goers of the day. Some of the other characters are also

(1) El Gran Filón. Act I. Scene 12. ll. 886 & 887.

(2) El Gran Filón. Act III. Scene 9. ll. 511, 512.

quite well described, as for example Jacinto's various friends and General Adán, but none of these make much impression.

The literary style of the comedy is easy and pleasant, and the versification is good. There are some very successful passages in which the words are simple and well chosen and the lines melodious.

"Y hémos aquí un abogado,
 "un médico, un ingeniero,
 "un gran poeta, un guerrero,
 "a cada cual más honrado,
 "sin enfermos que curar,
 "sin puentes que construir,
 "sin poemas que escribir,"(1)
 "y sin tropas que mandar."

On the other hand there is much inequality in the style of El Gran Filón, and we find other passages which possess neither smoothness nor harmony.

"Soy jefe de El Meteoro,
 "periódico independiente:
 "no lo lee mucha gente
 "pero yo gano un tesoro."(2)

The dialogue of the comedy is brisk, animated and natural. The author is fond of making play with words, and, if

(1) El Gran Filón. Act I. Scene 5. ll. 254-262.

(2) Do. Filón. Act II. Scene 12. ll. 812-815.

occasionally he is successful in this, at other times his efforts in this direction are lamentably poor.

"¡Ah! Caridad, Caridad,
"¿no la tendrá Vd. de mí?" (1)

Rubí was not one of the eminent writers of the period in which he lived. Certainly his popularity was amazingly great during his lifetime, because he knew his public well, and recognising their taste, wrote to please them. This fact, along with his natural gift for theatrical production, was largely responsible for his remarkable success. Not once during his whole dramatic career was any one of his productions turned down by the audience before which it was played. His popularity, however, has not lasted, and now his works are little known or appreciated. The qualities which we associate with his comedies are faithful reproduction of the social problems and interests of his own period, and brightness and humour in scene and dialogue. Rubí was a follower of Bretón de los Herreros, but he was not nearly such a great artist as his master, nor did he possess such a good literary style. Some of his

(1) El Gran Filón. Act I. Scene 1. ll. 63-64.

comedies dealt with high society and pointed forward to the dramatic productions of the next period. Yet they had little depth or moral force. They provoked amusement but not thought. Rubí was natural and sincere in all his works, but he made very little lasting impression as a dramatic author, nor did he have much influence at all on the development of Spanish comedy.

By the end of this period it was evident that the Romantic drama had lost favour in Spain, largely because of its exaggerations and unrealities. Yet in spite of its passing, some of its influence and its characteristics were to remain. As one critic says, "El romanticismo pasaba: pero no sin dejar claras y benéficas señales de su acción. Era como el aluvión que invade los campos, con peligro de vidas y haciendas, y al moderar sus ímpetus deja fecundada la tierra y fresco el ambiente. Disipadas las exageraciones románticas, sólo subsistían los efectos de su influencia en la literatura."⁽¹⁾ Thanks to Romanticism classical restraints had been swept away, and once more national

(1) Zorrilla, Su Vida y Sus Obras. N. Alonso Cortés. (Valladolid 1916-20) Vol.I., p.234.

inspiration and genius reigned supreme in the Spanish theatre. It is most important for us to remember that much of this freedom and national spirit was infused into the realistic comedy, which, in mid nineteenth century, was making such a strong bid to gain possession of the Spanish stage. Its popularity was yearly increasing, and it was fixing itself firmly in the affections of the public. This comedy was based on the observation and accurate reproduction of the realities of contemporary life and society; and it is along these lines that we must look for the evolution of the comedy of the next period, which in turn is the forerunner of modern Spanish comedy.

P A R T 2.

CHAPTER III.

THE DRAMA OF TRANSITION

(1850-1874).

By about the middle of the nineteenth century the Romantic drama as a genre had practically disappeared from Spanish literature. It had been ruined by the unrealities and exaggerations which made their appearance in many of the later works. Yet some of its qualities, its freedom, its vigour and its passion survived in certain of the works of the following period. As a result of the increasing unpopularity of the productions of Romanticism, Spanish authors naturally enough abandoned the Romantic drama and aimed at presenting works which would give a more true and faithful picture of life. Their principal design was to observe and reflect the society of their own generation. These ideas were not new to Spain, for they were the natural development of the methods employed by Bretón de los Herreros

and his followers during the first half of the nineteenth century. The study of contemporary life and its problems was continued in the second half of the century, but with certain differences.

This Realistic tendency within Spain was accentuated and guided by the influence of the French theatre which still had considerable effect on the development of Spanish dramatic literature. In France a strong reaction had taken place in the sphere of the drama and authors wrote realistic comedies of manners. At the same time they acted as moral advisers⁽¹⁾ in the everyday problems of life. Many of the prevalent social evils of the day were attacked and much was written in the endeavour to reconstitute society on a stronger moral foundation.

Spanish dramatists of this period adopted the realistic, moralising method of writing for the theatre. In many ways their productions differed from those of the national Spanish dramatists. In the 'comedias' of the 'Siglo de Oro' and also in the dramas of Romanticism,

(1) The two principal dramatists of the period were [/]Emile Augier (1820 - 1889) and Alexandre Dumas, fils (1824 - 1895).

the plot had been the essential element. Events had followed each other in rapid succession and the drawing of characters had been of much less importance. In the transition drama of Spain of the latter part of the nineteenth century, the action tended to become more and more simple, while on the other hand the psychological study of character was put in the forefront. In addition, the verse form changed to prose in the works of several of the authors. The prose employed was restrained and, while adequate, had a simplicity in keeping with the task to which the writers had set themselves. Nevertheless, Spanish realistic works of this period did retain many of the qualities which had been so closely associated with the great dramatic past of Spain, the mingling of tragic and comic elements, vigour, passion and sincerity of treatment.

The principal name in the drama of transition was that of Tamayo y Baus⁽¹⁾ who made an important and lasting contribution towards the development of the Spanish theatre. He was the son of actors, José Tamayo and

(1) Manuel Tamayo y Baus (1829 - 1898).

Joaquina Baus y Ponce de León, who owned a prosperous touring company which presented plays in Madrid and the provinces. Thus the author's early years were spent in the theatrical atmosphere, attending rehearsals and performances, witnessing successes and failures, coming in close contact with actors and public, learning all the problems and difficulties of the stage. Tamayo belonged to the theatre in a way that few other dramatic authors have done. He was part of it, and he could appreciate the reactions of an audience to a nicety. His dramatic sense was excellent, and his stagecraft and knowledge of the requirements of the theatre made it easy for him to obtain impressive scenes and effective curtains with a minimum of effort and artificiality. It is stated⁽¹⁾ that when only about ten years of age this dramatic prodigy adapted a play from the French, which was successfully presented by his parents and their company in Granada. This piece, Genoveva de Brabante, although of no real importance, is of interest in that it shows us Tamayo's youthful talent and enthusiasm for the drama.

(1) Prólogo a Las Obras de Tamayo y Baus. Alejandro Pidal y Mon. (Madrid 1898) Vol.I. p.XXX.

Born and bred in the atmosphere of the theatre, at no time in his life did he show aptitude for or interest in any other type of literary production.

During his early years Tamayo read widely and intelligently, concentrating particularly on all kinds of dramatic works. Firstly he knew and admired the works of many Spanish dramatists, especially those of the seventeenth century masters. He was ever a lover of his country, of her great traditions and of her literature. In addition, he had an intimate knowledge of most of the works of the great foreign dramatists. Traces of their influence were found in many of his plays. English dramatic literature was represented to him mainly by Shakespeare. During the first five or six years of his literary career he was under the influence of Schiller, the great German dramatist. He was also well acquainted with Alfieri, the Italian author, and many French writers, in particular the contemporary realists. Tamayo was a man of great intelligence and wide culture. He was peculiarly fitted for his task of dramatic production by his extremely wide knowledge of his own and foreign literatures. As Tannenberg says, "Ce mélange de culture étrangère, très

"large et très bien assimilé, et de traditionalisme
 "espagnol constitue un type littéraire de l'espèce la
 "plus rare".⁽¹⁾

Tamayo y Baus was an author whose career was one of progressive achievement. He wrote many different types of work during his twenty odd years⁽²⁾ of productivity, and the development of his ideas and methods was very apparent. As the years passed, his ideal of dramatic perfection advanced considerably. It makes an interesting study to begin by reading the author's first plays and to continue selecting his other important works in chronological order. Doing so, one cannot help being aware of the continuous progress in Tamayo's dramatic theory and practice.

In 1847 Tamayo wrote Juana de Arco, a historical drama in verse, consisting of four acts and a prologue. It was an adaptation of the romantic tragedy Die Jungfrau von Orleans (1801), one of Schiller's most artistically conceived works, and, so far as the writer is aware, no

(1) L'Espagne Littéraire. Boris de Tannenberg. (Paris 1903) p.8.

(2) 1847 - 1870 (excluding his production as a child).

detailed comparison of the works has yet been made. We may employ the word adaptation with regard to the play as a whole, but we must recognise from the very outset that most of the parts are merely abbreviated translations of the corresponding passages in the German work. The first point of interest, then, is that the Spanish author evidently aims at giving his audience an abridged version of Schiller's tragedy. In order to accomplish his object he employs various methods. With regard to the characters in the drama, Tamayo introduces only twenty-one people into his work, as compared with the twenty-seven who appear in the German version. The former cuts out several of the characters altogether, for example, Talbot, the English general, Montgomery, a Welshman, Bertrand, a Frenchman, and others. In consequence the author can neglect the episodes in which these people figure, and thus the whole piece is materially shortened. Besides the omission of several incidents, many of the scenes, although their matter closely resembles that of the corresponding parts in Die Jungfrau von Orleans, are much abbreviated.⁽¹⁾ In bulk, therefore, the Spanish

(1) E.g. Act II. Scene 1 (both plays) - 30 lines as compared with 84 lines.

Act II. Scene 2 (both plays) - 49 lines as compared with 153 lines.

play is much less imposing than the German original, for it contains a prologue and four acts, fifty scenes, as compared with a prologue and five acts, sixty-three scenes. Tamayo's drama consists of about 2,200 lines, considerably less than the 3,500 of Schiller's work, which has been cut down by approximately one third.

The story of the two plays is almost identical. It deals with the life of Joan of Arc between the time when she began her service to France and the day of her death, which, according to both authors, was the result of a fatal wound received when rallying her soldiers and leading them to victory, the last necessary to ensure the complete triumph of the French cause. Thus we are given the assurance by both Schiller and Tamayo that the Maid fully completed her task before her death. In the German tragedy Joan shouts,

"Mut, Mut, mein Volk! Es ist der letzte kampf!
 "Den einen Sieg noch, und der Feind liegt nieder." (1)

In the Spanish drama we have a very close translation of these lines, when Joan exclaims,

(1) Die Jungfrau. Act V. Scene 11, ll. 369-370.

"¡Valor, Valor! Es el postrer combate.
 "¡Otra victoria más, y al fin triunfamos!"⁽¹⁾

So, in both pieces we find emphasis laid on the completion of the Maid's task, her death coinciding with the conclusion of her work. Although the action and conception of the play as a whole are very like those of the original, there are certain divergences in the plot of Tamayo's drama, especially in the third act. The most simple and accurate method of comparing the two pieces is to examine them act by act, and note the resemblances and the differences between them.

The two prologues correspond very closely, the adaptation of Tamayo being as usual shorter, for he compresses the second and third scenes of Schiller's version into his own second scene. There is one slight difference, and that is with regard to the bearer of the helmet which is claimed by Joan. As the character of Bertrand does not appear in the Spanish drama, it is Thibaut⁽²⁾, Joan's father, who brings the helmet, while in Schiller it is

(1) Juana de Arco. Act IV. Scene 6, ll. 239-240.

(2) Do. Do. Prologue. Scene 1, l. 14.

Bertrand⁽¹⁾ who is its bearer. Apart from this slight variation, the helmet scene is the same in both works, similar reference being made to Joan's courage in the killing of a wolf that preyed on the sheep. It is spoken by the same character in both plays.

"Wohl ziemt ihr dieser kriegerische Schmuck,
 "Denn ihre Brust verschliesst ein männlich Herz.
 "Denkt nach, wie sie den Tigerwolf bezwang,
 "Des grimmig wilde Tier, das unsre Herden⁽²⁾
 "Verwustete, den Schrecken aller Hirten."

In the Spanish version Raimond's words resemble the German ones very closely, when he says,

" Ese guerrero
 "Adorno le será grato,
 "Porque un corazón de bronce
 "Su seno encierra. Acordaos
 "Cómo rindió al fiero lobo⁽³⁾
 "Que asolaba los rebaños."

Very similar descriptions of the war are given by Thibaut⁽⁴⁾ and by Bertrand⁽⁵⁾, and it is obvious that many of Joan's speeches also are translations from the German, the

- (1) Die Jungfrau. Prologue. Scene 3, l. 158.
 (2) Do. Do. Prologue. Scene 3, ll. 195-199.
 (3) Juana de Arco. Prologue. Scene 1, ll. 69-74.
 (4) Do. Do. Prologue. Scene 2, l. 241.
 (5) Die Jungfrau. Prologue. Scene 3, l. 215.

phraseology and the figures of speech being identical. What could bear a closer resemblance than those two little phrases of the Maid when speaking of herself?

"Eine weisse Taube
"Wird fliegen und mit Adlers Kühnheit diese Geier
"Anfallen," (1)

"Y triunfará la cándida paloma
"Del águila caudal ... " (2)

There is one difference evident to a certain extent even in the prologue, and that is the fact that in Schiller's version, Thibaut voices at this early stage⁽³⁾ his suspicion that Joan is communing with evil spirits. Whereas in Tamayo's character reference to the supernatural is absent. This difference becomes more apparent as the play goes on. The prologues conclude similarly, the Spanish passage beginning with the words,

"¡Adiós, valles tranquilos y apacibles," (4)

being a translation of Joan's words of farewell to her

(1) Die Jungfrau. Prologue. Scene 3, ll. 315-317.

(2) Juana de Arco. Prologue. Scene 2, ll. 326-327.

(3) Die Jungfrau. Prologue. Scene 2, ll. 80-108.

(4) Juana de Arco. Prologue. Scene 3, whole scene.

native district, so beautifully expressed by Schiller in the lines beginning

"Lebt wohl, ihr Berge, ihr geliebten Triften ..."(1)

The first few scenes of act one are very much alike in the two plays. They explain the financial difficulties of the Dauphin Charles who is even unable to satisfy the demands of his soldiers for the pay owing to them. Inés, Charles' favourite, gives a casket of jewels in order to assist the Dauphin. One can note only some very small differences at the beginning of this act, such as the fact that envoys from Orleans appear at a slightly later stage in the development of the Spanish⁽²⁾ action than in that of the German⁽³⁾ work, and that Dunois is sent as messenger to the Duke of Burgandy in Tamayo's drama, while in that of Schiller, La Hire is despatched on this errand, Dunois remaining at home. The chief impression made by the first eight scenes of this act is one of great similarity. Particularly in one scene is this resemblance apparent, and that is the part dealing with

(1) Die Jungfrau. Prologue. Scene 4, whole scene.

(2) Juana de Arco. Act I. Scene 6.

(3) Die Jungfrau. Act I. Scene 3.

the episode of Duchatel's offer to sacrifice his life in order to procure peace with Burgandy. Certain of the Spanish lines sound like a free translation from the German.

"Hier ist mein Haupt. Ich hab'es oft für dich
"Gewagt in Schlachten, und ich leg'es jetzt⁽¹⁾
"Für dich mit Freuden auf das Blutgerüste."

"Aquí tenéis mi cabeza.
"Mil veces de las batallas
"Al furor la he presentado:
"Por vos a depositarla
"En el cadalso orgulloso
"Iré con segura planta."⁽²⁾

From this point onwards there are a few divergences in the first act. In the Spanish version we do not find Dunois and Charles the Dauphin changing places, as they do in Die Jungfrau⁽³⁾, in order to test Joan's wisdom, nor do we have her proving her divine authority by revealing⁽⁴⁾ Charles' prayers of the preceding night. Neither does she give instructions as to where the special sword⁽⁵⁾ prepared for her use is to be found, but,

(1) Die Jungfrau. Act I. Scene 6, ll. 457-459.

(2) Juana de Arco. Act I. Scene 8, ll. 358-363.

(3) Act I. Scene 9, l. 571.

(4) Die Jungfrau. Act I. Scene 10, ll. 581-599.

(5) Do. Do. Act I. Scene 10, l. 716.

according to Tamayo⁽¹⁾, she accepts the one presented to her by the Dauphin. Towards the end of the act there is also the omission from Tamayo's work of another supernatural prophecy on the part of the maid. This occurs in Schiller in the scene with the English herald, where Joan tells⁽²⁾ the latter of the death of the Earl of Salisbury, which has happened since the messenger left the English camp and which he is to discover, when he returns there. In the German version there is great emphasis laid on the mystical side of the character of Joan. Being a virgin, she is granted very special, supernatural powers. On the other hand, Tamayo gives us a rationalised version of the drama. The Spanish author consistently changes or omits incidents which illustrate miracles wrought by Joan and which are due to her supernatural gifts. This tendency to rationalise his adaptation of Schiller's tragedy can be traced all through the work.

The end of the first act in the two versions is slightly different, the last few lines of the Spanish drama concluding with an eloquent prayer,

(1) Juana de Arco. Act I. Scene 12, l. 431.

(2) Die Jungfrau. Act I. Scene 11, l. 759.

(1) Juana de Arco. Act I. Scene 12, l. 431.

(2) Die Jungfrau. Act I. Scene 11, l. 759.

"¡Tú, que lirio entre espinas te levantas
 "Y al justo ayudas y al malvado, espantas,
 "Dame romper la esclavitud impía,
 "Dame entonar el cántico divino
 "De gloria y libertad, paz y alegría!"⁽¹⁾

and in the German drama with defiance to the English,

"Jetzt, Herold, geh und mach' dich eilends fort,
 "Denn eh' du noch das Lager magst erreichen
 "Und Botschaft bringen, ist die Jungfrau dort⁽²⁾
 "Und pflanzt in Orleans das Siegeszeichen."

With regard to the first act, our conclusion is that the Spanish is an exact adaptation, in many parts even a translation of the German, except for a very few changes and omissions of a minor nature.

Tamayo's second act contains both the second and third acts of Schiller's drama. Therefore, from the beginning we are prepared for many omissions and much abbreviation. In the Spanish play Burgandy does not go so far as to order⁽³⁾ his troops to leave, nor does Queen Isabel venture to offer⁽⁴⁾ to lead the combined English and Burgundian forces against the Maid and her

(1) Juana de Arco. Act I. Scene 14, last 5 lines.

(2) Die Jungfrau. Act II. Scene 11, last 4 lines.

(3) Do. Do. Act I. Scene 1, line 74.

(4) Do. Do. Act I. Scene 2, line 151.

army. In the third scene of Die Jungfrau the patriotic English general Lionel gives us an indication⁽¹⁾ of his desire to discredit Joan and to take her prisoner. There is no trace of this in the corresponding Spanish scene. A little hint of Lionel's intention might not have been out of place here, in view of the important part which he plays later in the Spanish drama. Then, the incident of Joan's fighting a duel⁽²⁾ with Montgomery, an unwilling opponent, and her killing of him, is omitted by Tamayo who probably may not have wished to emphasise this side of the Maid's character. A certain amount of dramatic effect is lost by this omission, as her treatment of Montgomery forms a striking comparison to her leniency with regard to Lionel later on in the play. In Schiller's tragedy, Joan is created⁽³⁾ a noble by Charles, and in the same scene Dunois and La-Hire both avow their love for her. There is no trace of this in the Spanish drama. Nor do we find in it the Duke of Burgandy gracefully restoring⁽⁴⁾

(1) Die Jungfrau. Act I. Scene 3, l. 264.

(2) Do. Do. Act II. Scene 6.

(3) Do. Do. Act III. Scene 4.

(4) Do. Do. Act III. Scene 3.

to Inés the casket of jewels which she had presented to her country. Later there occur further omissions, the death⁽¹⁾ of Talbot and the warning⁽²⁾ of the Black Knight to Joan not to enter Rheims. This last omission is one further illustration of Tamayo's decision to rationalise the drama. Throughout this second act, Tamayo has been forced of necessity to omit incidents and to abbreviate scenes and speeches. This continuous curtailment sometimes detracts from the natural development of the action. Yet despite this abbreviation, the resemblance between the two dramas in this section is striking. The part⁽³⁾ where Burgandy is won over again to his old allegiance, is similarly treated in both plays, and many of the sentiments expressed on this occasion by Schiller's Joan are reproduced in the Spanish version, although as often in a condensed form.

"Ein güt'ger Herr tut seine Pforten auf
 "Für alle Gäste, keinen schliesst er aus;
 "Frei, wie das Firmament die Welt umspannt,
 "So muss die Gnade Freund und Feind umschliessen.
 "Es schickt die Sonne ihre Strahlen gleich
 "Nach allen Räumen der Unendlichkeit;
 "Gleichmässig giesst der Himmel seinen Tau
 "Auf alle durstenden Gewächse aus."⁽⁴⁾

(1) Die Jungfrau. Act III. Scene 6.

(2) Do. Do. Act III. Scene 9.

(3) (Juana de Arco. Act II. Scene 8.
 (Die Jungfrau Act III. Scene 3.

(4) Die Jungfrau. Act III. Scene 4, l. 244.

Such are the eloquent words employed by the Maid in her attempt to persuade Burgandy to pardon Duchatel, his father's murderer, and the corresponding Spanish version is very similar.

"A todos sus puertas abre
 "Un generoso Señor.
 "Bañadas todas las plantas
 "Del claro rocío son,
 "En el espacio sin límites (1)
 "Vierte sus rayos el sol.

Burgandy's prayer⁽²⁾ to his father's spirit for forgiveness is also an abbreviated version of the German. The last scene in this act of Juana de Arco, the one after Joan's encounter with Lionel, is not to be found in Schiller's work. That is when he produces the Maid's sword as proof of his being her lover and reveals his plan of entering Rheims to announce this fact to the King, the Court and the people, and thus to bring disgrace and discredit on Joan. This addition is an indication of the different development of the plot in the next act.

During the Prologue and two first acts of Juana de Arco the play has shown no signs at all of originality

(1) Juana de Arco. Act II. Scene 9, l. 267.

(2) (Juana de Arco. Act II. Scene 9, l. 308.
 (Die Jungfrau. Act III. Scene 4, l. 257.

in story, the main difference consisting in the omission of certain incidents and the cutting down of speeches. In the third act, however, there is a new development. The first three scenes inside the cathedral are omitted by Tamayo, and the beginning of the act shows us a square outside the cathedral, where Joan's sisters are waiting in the hope of seeing her again. In this part there is evident the same close resemblance in certain of the speeches. In Die Jungfrau von Orleans Louison says,

"Ich Kann's nicht glauben, bis ich sie mit Augen
 "Gesehn, dass diese Mächtige, die man
 "Die Jungfrau nennt von Orleans, unsre Schwester
 "Johanna ist, die uns verloren ging."(1)

While Margarita, the other sister, uses the same ideas and words in Juana de Arco.

"Hasta yo propia mirarlo,
 "No podré creer jamás
 "Que esa guerrera invencible,
 "La doncella de Orleans,
 "(1) Juana "Es la hermana a quien perdida
 "No he cesado de llorar."(2)

In the German version they see and talk⁽³⁾ with her, but

(1) Die Jungfrau. Act IV. Scene 5, l. 271.

(2) Juana de Arco. Act III. Scene 1, l. 23.

(3) Die Jungfrau. Act IV. Scene 9.

in the Spanish they only see⁽¹⁾ her as she passes. Thibaut, the loving father, is the only one to converse⁽²⁾ with her after she leaves the church. Later, when the newly-crowned King and his followers emerge from the cathedral in triumph, Lionel comes forward and denounces Joan in front of all. "Amado soy de un ángel" "que maldigo,"⁽³⁾ he says, and so the Maid is discredited. This episode is different from that in Schiller's drama, in which it is Thibaut⁽⁴⁾, the fanatic father, who denounces his daughter as having been the saviour of her country through the aid of the devil and not of heaven. In Die Jungfrau von Orleans the Maid does not defend herself. She keeps silence, in the knowledge that she has sinned in letting love for Lionel into her heart. She is no longer the immaculate virgin of her early triumphs. After a very dramatic scene⁽⁵⁾, equally

(1) Juana de Arco. Act III. Scene 2.

(2) Do. Do. Act III. Scene 5.

(3) Do. Do. Act III. Scene 7, l. 289.

(4) Die Jungfrau. Act IV. Scene 11.

(5) (Juana de Arco. Act III. Scene 7.
(Die Jungfrau. Act IV. Scene 11.

effective in both works, with peals of thunder representing divine wrath, Joan is judged guilty and banished. In Die Jungfrau she leaves the city in Raimond's company, while in Juana de Arco Joan is comforted by her faithful father.

The fourth act of the Spanish work begins in a slightly different way from Schiller's fifth act. We are informed that Queen Isabel has captured Joan and an old man who, as we suppose, is Thibaut her father. In the German tragedy the first eight scenes of the corresponding act show us Joan and Raimond wandering in the country, Joan justifying herself to Raimond who, after the Maid's capture by Queen Isabel and her soldiers, bears the news to the French camp. Tamayo reaches the main part of the action here much more quickly than does the German author. In both plays, therefore, we eventually find Joan a prisoner⁽¹⁾ in the hands of the enemy general Lionel, Queen Isabel and the English troops who clamour for her death. In both works it is evident that Lionel is unwilling to kill her, and he offers to save

(1) (Die Jungfrau. Act V. Scene 9.
Juana de Arco. Act IV. Scene 3.

her on certain conditions. According to Schiller, Lionel, the lover, wishes to carry her off. He says,

" - Antworte mir, Johanna! Sei die Meine,
"Und gegen eine Welt beschüss' ich dich." (1)

In the Spanish version, he is the fervent patriot who does all in his power to persuade Joan to transfer her allegiance and lead the troops of his beloved England to victory. He addresses her thus,

"¡Si nuestra causa amparasés,
"Cuál otra tu suerte fuera!
"Amada y obedecida
"Te alzarías nuestra Reina,
"Y sólo con tú quererlo
"Al sol hiciéramos guerra.
"Una vez rendida Francia,
"Rindiérase Europa entera,
"Y el orbe retendría
"Al son de las trompas nuestras." (2)

Both appeals are equally vain and are emphatically rejected by Joan. The French arrive to give battle, and the Queen is left in charge of the prisoner who is to be killed in the event of a French victory. A captain describes the fight, which ends in an English triumph, for

(1) Die Jungfrau. Act V. Scene 9, l. 288.

(2) Juana de Arco. Act IV. Scene 3, l. 65.

the French appear to be uninspired without their leader. Joan, dismayed and furious at the defeat of her troops, is released from her chains, rushes out to the field of battle and is able to rally her men and lead them to victory. In the German drama⁽¹⁾, the Maid is permitted by divine help to break her chains asunder and thus to gain her freedom. We have here another example of the rationalisation of the Spanish version. This supernatural proceeding is omitted and a simple explanation is given. Tamayo⁽²⁾ puts another good action to the credit of her father Thibaut who, having gained admittance to the tower and been put on sentry duty, is able to free his daughter and send her out to battle. Joan is mortally wounded in this engagement, and she passes away peacefully and happily in the presence⁽³⁾ of her father and of her friends, the King, Burgandy, Dunois and La-Hire, knowing that all doubts as to her virtue have been removed and that she is again trusted and loved.

(1) Die Jungfrau. Act V. Scene 11 (the end).

(2) Juana de Arco. Act IV. Scene 6 (end).

(3) Not in Die Jungfrau where of course Thibaut does not see his daughter after his denunciation of her in Rheims.

There is a great resemblance between the speeches in the last scene of the two plays. The King declares her divine innocence in like terms in both works.

"Du bist heilig wie die Engel,
"Doch unser Auge war mit Nacht bedeckt." (1)

In the Spanish, we find a free translation of this.

"Eres un ángel, sí ¡De las virtudes
"ciega la viva luz a los malvados!" (2)

The end of the Spanish tragedy is identical, the Maid expiring murmuring the words,

"¡Pasajero es el dolor!,
"¡Ay! Eterna la alegría." (3)

an exact rendering of Schiller's beautiful lines,

"Kurz ist der Schmerz, und ewig ist die Freude." (4)

In his suppression of the central, mystical idea of Schiller's drama, Tamayo, as has been noticed, omitted or changed incidents relating to the supernatural

(1) Die Jungfrau. Act V. Scene 14, l. 474.

(2) Juana de Arco. Act IV. Scene 11, l. 382.

(3) Do. Do. Last two lines of play.

(4) Die Jungfrau. Last line of play.

powers bestowed upon Joan, the virgin. It is surprising to find a Spanish dramatist who chose to neglect the mystical element in the work he was adapting; one would have thought that this part of the original would have made special appeal to an author of Spanish nationality. But it was not so with this play of Tamayo. His rationalisation of the spirit of the German tragedy tended to make the Spanish version less romantic than the original, so that even in 1847 Tamayo was withdrawing from extreme Romanticism.

As a direct result of Tamayo's modification of the story, we find that the character of Joan's father becomes sympathetic and different from that of the Thibaut of the German version, who from the opening scenes⁽¹⁾ appears to be convinced that the powers of evil have taken possession of his daughter. His only other appearance in Schiller's tragedy is in the square outside the cathedral of Rheims when he denounces⁽²⁾ her. From the very beginning of the Spanish drama we find in Thibaut a great tenderness and strength of character, which are shown

(1) Die Jungfrau. Act I. Scene 2, l. 80-156.

(2) Do. Do. Act IV. Scene 11.

through all the different stages of the work. These reveal themselves when he tries⁽¹⁾ to persuade Joan to return home again, in coming to her rescue⁽²⁾ after she has been disgraced and discredited and in defending⁽³⁾ her against capture by the English, in releasing⁽⁴⁾ her from chains so that she may head her troops to victory, and lastly when he watches disconsolately by her death-bed, imploring God to accept his life for hers.

"¡Dios clemente!

"Mi vida toma de su vida en cambio."⁽⁵⁾

In Joan's father, Tamayo has created a strong character, faithful and of loyal affection, a very different Thibaut from the loveless, fanatical character of the German version.

One great advantage of Tamayo's adaptation of the German work is, he frequently succeeds in cutting down and rearranging the scenes in such a way that the drama

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- | | | | |
|-----|----------------|----------|-------------------|
| (1) | Juana de Arco. | Act III. | Scene 6. |
| (2) | Do. Do. | Act III. | Scene 8. |
| (3) | Do. Do. | Act IV. | Scene 2, l. 31. |
| (4) | Do. Do. | Act IV. | Scene 6. |
| (5) | Do. Do. | Act IV. | Scene 11, l. 374. |

must have been much more easily produced. The eleven scenes of the fourth act of the Spanish piece all take place in the interior of a tower. The fifth act of Schiller's tragedy, the corresponding act, has three complete changes of scenery, the first part taking place in a wild part of a wood, then changing to the French camp, then to a tower and lastly to the battlefield. This same difficulty of production evident elsewhere⁽¹⁾ in the German work has been remedied by Tamayo, who, as has been stated, had a thorough technical knowledge of the theatre.

The form and versification of Juana de Arco are excellent. Much of the play is written in the assonantal octosyllabic 'romance', and the 'romance real' of eleven syllables is also frequently employed, interspersed with short lines of seven syllables. One part which is strikingly good is the long speech⁽²⁾ made by Joan in front of the assembled court, explaining her origin and her mission. A section of this is in imitation of the

(1) Die Jungfrau. Act II. and Act III.

(2) Juana de Arco. Act I. Scene 12, l. 426-526.

corresponding German passage, but the latter part is mainly original. Occasionally we find lyrical passages composed of 'redondillas'. Some of the most beautiful lines of the whole play are to be found in the moving words of Thibaut, urging his beloved daughter to return to her home.

"Desde tu adiós postrimero,
 "Los prados no han florecido,
 "Y con lúgubre balido
 "Te llama el triste cordero.

"No se despeña el torrente
 "Con sus gritos de alegría,
 "Sino en ayes de agonía,
 "Murmura pausadamente."⁽¹⁾

Shortly after Juana de Arco there appeared in 1848 another verse drama by Tamayo. El Cinco de Agosto was the author's first original work and showed most of the exaggerations and faults of Romanticism. Naturally enough, the play was a failure and was criticised very severely on all sides. Some of the critics were apparently extremely scathing in their remarks. Tamayo, however, was not discouraged by this adverse criticism and he continued steadily along the path he had chosen.

(1) Juana de Arco. Act III. Scene 5, ll.165-172.

The next important work of Tamayo y Baus was written in prose. It was a five act drama, Ángela, which was successfully presented in 1852. This play quite obviously bears some resemblance to Schiller's tragedy Kabale und Liebe (1784), although the Spanish drama is very far from being an adaptation of the German. Tamayo admits his indebtedness to Schiller quite frankly in his own prologue to Ángela, saying, "El presente drama es hijo legítimo del titulado Intriga y Amor de Schiller: se parece a éste como un hijo a su padre; tiene el aire de familia."⁽¹⁾ Later, he indicates that he is proud to have been inspired by this masterpiece of such an excellent dramatist, "porque, en literatura como en religión, imitar lo bueno es seguir el camino de la virtud."⁽²⁾ The position appears to be that the Spanish dramatist was deeply impressed on reading this work of Schiller, and his own drama was the direct result of the impression made on him.

In the Spanish drama, the plot is mainly based on the fact that El Príncipe de San Mario, in order to

(1) Obras de Tamayo y Baus. (Madrid 1898). Prologue to Ángela. Vol.I., p.189.

(2) Obras de Tamayo y Baus. (Madrid 1898). Prologue to Ángela. Vol.I., p.189.

further his own advancement, wishes to marry a certain Countess Adelaide to his son Conrad, who is in love with Ángela, a flower-maker. The prince tells us that "el día en que se firmase el contrato de boda de su muy amada Adelaide, firmaría el Duque su esposo un despacho nombrándome primer Ministro".⁽¹⁾ This situation closely resembles that of the German tragedy where the President, for very similar reasons, wishes to marry Lady Milford to his son Ferdinand who is in love with Louisa Miller, a poor musician's daughter. Here are the words of President von Walter, giving his reasons for the marriage he is trying to arrange. "Der Herzog sucht eine Partie für die Milford. Ein Anderer kann sich melden - den Kauf schliessen, mit der Dame das Vertrauen des Fürsten an sich reißen, sich ihm unentbehrlich machen - damit nun der Fürst im Nest meiner Familie bleibe, soll mein Ferdinand die Milford heirathen."⁽²⁾ The attitude of the Prince towards Conrad all through the Spanish drama resembles that of the father towards

(1) Ángela. Act I. Scene 2.

(2) Kabale und Liebe. Act I. Scene 5.

Ferdinand in the German tragedy. Both men put their personal ambition before their paternal⁽¹⁾ duty.

There are other similarities in the general outline of the plot. Both the heroines are deeply devoted to one of their parents, Ángela to Magdalena, her mother, and Louisa to her father. Also both of these parents wish their daughter's love affair to stop, and they do their utmost to persuade her to conclude it. Another point of resemblance is that Lady Milford is in love with Ferdinand in Kabale und Liebe, as is Countess Adelaide with Conrad in Ángela. Each is jealous of the girl who has succeeded in winning the affections of the hero, but afterwards helps the lovers as much as she can.

The fourth scene of the first act of the Spanish version corresponds to the seventh scene of the first act of Schiller's work and describes the interview in which the father orders his son to marry the person chosen for him. In each case the son refuses and thereafter an open state of war exists between the two.

(1) In Ángela it turns out that the Prince is not really Conrad's father.

The effective finale of the second act of Ángela is evidently based on the corresponding conclusion of the second act of Schiller's tragedy. Here the son openly defies his father. In Kabale und Liebe Ferdinand is successful, for, in the meantime at any rate, all go free; but in Tamayo's drama, the efforts of Conrad are fruitless, because despite them Magdalena is carried off as a prisoner.

In the third act there are also some incidents similar to those in the German work. We have the meeting⁽¹⁾ of Countess Adelaide and Ángela, which can compare with that⁽²⁾ of Lady Milford and Louisa, but the spirit in which the encounter is carried through, and its conclusion, are different in the two plays. Then there is another point of resemblance with regard to the incident of the letter. Ángela is forced⁽³⁾ by the prince, through the threat of the death penalty being imposed on her mother, to write a letter to the Marquis of Pompiliani

(1) Ángela. Act III. Scene 6.

(2) Kabale und Liebe. Act IV. Scene 7.

(3) Ángela. Act III. Scene 8.

making an assignation with him. She does so very unwillingly, and the note falls into the hands of Conrad, as it was intended to do. He challenges⁽¹⁾ his rival to fight a duel, but the Marquis's gallantry does not go this length, and so the duel does not take place. There is a corresponding scene⁽²⁾ in Schiller's drama, where Louisa is forced into writing a note to Marshal von Kalb by an agent of the President. She is induced to do so by the fear that her father is to have criminal proceedings brought against him. The letter falls into Ferdinand's hands, who also tries⁽³⁾ to fight with his supposed rival and finds that he is a coward. Here, however, the similarity in incident stops.

The end of the third act of Tamayo's drama is different from that of Kabale und Liebe. Magdalena is liberated from prison and returns home to find that her daughter Ángela has gone mad. This part forms an exceedingly effective curtain to the third act. The fourth and fifth acts develop on different lines also. Schiller's

(1) Ángela. Act III. Scene 10.

(2) Kabale und Liebe. Act III. Scene 6.

(3) Do. Do. Act IV. Scene 2.

tragedy ends with the death of Louisa and Ferdinand, but Tamayo causes his drama to end happily. Innocence was ruthlessly pursued by evil but in the end it is victorious, when the personification of evil dies, after justifying innocence and commending himself to the mercy of God - a typical finish to a play of Tamayo, where good emerges triumphant over evil.

It appears, therefore, that this drama was directly inspired by certain aspects of the plot of Schiller's Kabale und Liebe, but that Tamayo developed and concluded the action in a very different way from that of the German writer. There are common to both plays certain incidents of which we have made mention above, but, apart from those and even in those, there is much dissimilarity of treatment. Tamayo's own personality pervades the Spanish work, and his dramatic skill is clearly shown, especially in the conclusion of some⁽¹⁾ of the acts. The plot is full of incident and unexpected developments. The prose style is clear and concise, with simple, well-chosen words. There is much in this work that is

(1) Especially Act II. and Act III.

original in incident, thought and spirit. Tamayo, after admitting his indebtedness to Schiller, says, "Salvo rarísimas excepciones, la expresión, el giro, "el carácter y el desarrollo son, hasta en las situaciones a que aludo, completamente desiguales en ambos "dramas."⁽¹⁾ He states later⁽²⁾ that the greatest dramatists of all time were only on rare occasions entirely original in plot. Shakespeare, Racine, Molière, Corneille, Calderón, Lope de Vega all borrowed ideas from various sources, and their works were famous. This later drama of Tamayo is on a very different level from Juana de Arco which was merely an adaptation of Die Jungfrau von Orleans. Ángela, on the other hand, showed considerable traces of originality both in treatment of scenes and the development and conclusion of the plot.

In 1853 Virginia, a five act tragedy in verse, was presented. Tamayo, greatly daring, attempted here to write classical tragedy, but not on the same lines as

(1) Obras de Tamayo y Baus. (Madrid 1898) Prologue to Ángela. Vol. I. p.190.

(2) Obras de Tamayo y Baus. (Madrid 1898) Prologue to Ángela. Vol. I. p.191.

before. He broke with the traditions of this genre and made it lose some of its classic severity. His characters act more and talk less, and he infused more feeling and naturalness into his work. It was almost as if some of the warm spirit of Romanticism had flowed into cool, correct tragedy. Tamayo was only twenty-four years of age when he wrote Virginia, and we find in the work the ardour, impetuosity and passionate feelings of youth. "Mi Virginia no es la obra trazada por la madurez de los años, que todo lo medita y analiza con fría calma, vencedora del entusiasmo la reflexión. Mi Virginia es hija de la ardorosa juventud que siente más que reflexiona y se deja arrebatar en ímpetu irresistible"(1) There is sympathy and sincerity in every scene of this work, and at the end we cannot fail to be affected by the striking, restrained dénouement when the father Virginio, in anguish and sorrow, kills his daughter Virginia at her own request to save her honour. The choice of subject was a happy one for a Spanish play and made great appeal to Spanish audiences.

(1) Obras de Tamayo y Baus. (Madrid 1898) Vol.II.
p.26.

The story is not original and has been presented before by several authors, notably by Montiano y Luyando (1750), by the Italian dramatist Alfieri (1778), and by the French author Latour de Saint-Ibars (1845). Tamayo's work, however, is the finest of these, completely surpassing that of the French author, whose tragedy is only mediocre, and excelling Alfieri in restraint and sincerity of feeling. It is interesting to observe that the German dramatist Lessing has written a play which deals also with this theme. Emilia Galotti (1772) is composed of five acts in prose and is modern in setting, the scene being laid at an Italian court where the Prince of Guastalla reigns supreme. In Tamayo's drama we are never allowed to lose sight of the fact that the people of Rome are waiting for a suitable moment to assert their rights. The work, besides being a tragedy, is also a glorification of freedom, and ends on a triumphant note of popular liberty and vengeance. "¡Muera! ¡Muera! ¡Muera!"⁽¹⁾ shouts the mob as it surges around the tribune of Claudio. This aspect is absent in Lessing's drama, which concentrates on the picture of the horrors of tyranny, but does not venture to suggest a remedy.

(1) Last line of Virginia.

The characters in Emilia Galotti are well drawn, very vivid and very real. The Prince, tyrannical, egoistic and licentious, who will allow nothing to stand in the way of his pleasure, is the central figure of the drama. Marinelli, his chamberlain and satellite, abets him in his designs. The heroine is attractive and womanly and yet in the end shows herself to be possessed of almost unbelievable strength and courage. The other characters are all graphically presented, the father, Odoardo, rugged and impetuous, but upright and noble, the mother, Claudia, loving but imprudent, Count Appiani, the bridegroom, and the crazy Orsina, the Prince's former mistress. These characters, in Lessing's play, are all so strong that it appears as if they determine the plot and guide the course of its development. In Virginia, on the other hand, the action of the tragedy is dominant, and the characters are secondary to the plot.

The treatment of the story in the two tragedies is different. The Spanish version opens with the marriage⁽¹⁾ of Icilio and Virginia, and it is only afterwards, when

(1) Virginia. Act I. Scene 4.

Claudio has successfully carried out his plan of sending both husband and father away to war, that he says,

"No bien se alejen buscaré a Virginia.
 "La vi, y al verla, en férvido incentivo
 "Mi pecho ardió; sucumba. ¡Así lo quiere
 "Quien nació para ser obedecido!"(1)

In the German tragedy the Prince does not allow the wedding to be carried through. Near the beginning he explains to his chamberlain, "Nun ja, ich liebe sie; "ich bete sin an,"(2) and forthwith Marinelli and his master begin their schemes to prevent the marriage. The Prince himself approaches Emilia in church and pleads his cause. Later he offers Count Appiani a good appointment, on condition that he departs immediately to take up his duties. But all is useless, for the wedding preparations go on. As a last resort Marinelli arranges for an attack on the coach in which Emilia, her mother, and Count Appiani are travelling. The Count is killed, and the heroine is carried off to the Prince's country house. In the Spanish version, after the withdrawal of the father and husband, Claudio pursues his

(1) Virginia. Act I. Scene 6, ll. 366-369.

(2) Emilia Galotti. Act I. Scene 6, l. 365.

plan, first trying to seduce Virginia and then subtly arranging a scheme, in which it is claimed that she is not a free agent, as her mother was really a slave.

The resemblance between the two tragedies lies in the conclusion. In each work the heroine is faced with shame and disgrace, and in each case she deliberately chooses death rather than surrender to the other fate. Emilia has to plead very strongly with her father before he will accede to her request. Indeed the argument which eventually proves successful is her reference to the old Roman tragedy. "Ehedem wohl gab es einen Vater, "der, seine Tochter von der Schande zu retten, ihr den "ersten den besten Stahl in das Herz senkte ihr zum zweiten "das Leben gab. Aber alle solche Taten sind von ehedem! "Solcher Väter gibt es keinen mehr!"⁽¹⁾ Finally Odoardo strikes his daughter with the dagger which he received from Orsina, who hoped that with it the old man would destroy the tyrant. This thought certainly was in the father's mind also, for he exclaims to Emilia, "Ich ward "auch so wütend, dass ich schon nach diesem Dolche griff,

(1) Emilia Galotti. Act V. Scene 7. ll. 403-407.

"um einem von beiden - beiden! - das Herz zu durch-
 "stossen."⁽¹⁾ Such an assassination might have given quite a satisfactory conclusion to Lessing's tragedy. In Virginia the dénouement was logical and correct, for Roman society of the fourth century condoned such an act, in fact demanded it as the only solution of the problem.

Virginia was Tamayo's first great work. It showed many of the qualities of youth, and yet it was developed artistically and truthfully as if by an author of experience. The plot was admirably conceived and sustained, and the dénouement was impressive in its restrained tragedy. The characters were well drawn, particularly that of Virginia and her father Virginio. The verse in which the piece was written was concise, vigorous, full of power and beauty. In Virginia Spanish literature possesses one of the finest tragedies of the nineteenth century.

After the success of his new venture in classical tragedy, Tamayo turned his attention to a completely different type of production. In the year 1854 there

(1) Emilia Galotti. Act V. Scene V., ll. 361-363.

appeared La Ricahembra, a historical verse drama in four acts. It was written in collaboration with Don Aureliano Fernández-Guerra y Orbe. The scene was laid in Spain of 1386, and the whole atmosphere of the work resembled that of the old 'Romanceros'. It was a return to the national tradition of the Spanish 'comedia' and written in a style something like that of Lope de Vega or Tirso de Molina. There was an abundance of action in the drama, which possessed an interesting, clever plot and numerous incidents. Dona Juana, the Ricahembra, was a very strong personality indeed, but her character lacked light and shade, nor did it develop much as the play proceeded. This drama was one typical of the old Spanish style with abundance of action but indifferent psychological development of character.

One year afterwards (1855) there appeared the second great work of the author La Locura de Amor, a historic drama based on the tragic story of Juana la Loca⁽¹⁾, as she is known in history. Tamayo endeavoured to show how her madness was really only her passionate, jealous

(1) Daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella married to Philip of Austria.

love for her unworthy husband Philip I. This work⁽¹⁾ was written in prose, as were almost all the author's other dramatic works⁽²⁾ of later years. He considered that this medium of expression was much more suitable than verse for the type of drama which he wished to produce. His prose was concise, natural, and vigorous. This was a definite step forward in the method of writing serious dramatic works, and in this idea Tamayo was in advance of most⁽³⁾ of his contemporaries. The subject of the play was intensely national and the treatment of it was to a large extent Romantic. There were incidents and thrilling episodes to satisfy everyone. It was a drama of love and jealousy, ambition and intrigue, treachery and loyalty. The endings to the acts were effective and the structure of the play was artistic and well developed. The conclusion to the drama was particularly moving, when Juana standing beside her dead husband, said,

(1) Ángela (1852) had been written in prose also.

(2) La Bola de Nieve (1856) is a notable exception to this, being written in verse.

(3) Even Ayala wrote his dramas in verse.

"¡Silencio, señores, silencio!

"El Rey se ha dormido. ¡Silencio! ... no le despertéis.

"¡Duerme, amor mío: duerme ..., duerme!" (1)

Apart from being written in prose, the other great interest of this work is the advancement in the psychological study of the characters. We find the heroine Juana in all her varying moods of fury, tenderness, and royal dignity and each well and ably presented to us. Her character unfolds to us gradually, and in the end we have before us a complete picture of this afflicted but noble woman with all her trials and passions. Her consort Philip also is well described, with his shallowness, selfishness, deceit and treachery. There is one point which appears unconvincing and that is Philip's death-bed avowal of his deep love for his wife. This hardly seems true or natural, for all his actions in life had consistently proved the contrary. Yet Tamayo might merely wish to indicate the crowning insincerity of Philip's life - even in the face of death.

In passing it might be mentioned that up to this year (1855) most of Tamayo's outstanding characters have

(1) Last three lines of the play.

been women, as for example Joan of Arc, Virginia, the Ricahembra and Juana la Loca. This persists in many⁽¹⁾ of his later works too. This characteristic is fairly common in the modern Spanish theatre and reveals itself in the works of Galdós, the brothers Quintero, Martínez Sierra and Benavente. In the case of twentieth century authors, this fact is probably a natural development. The Spanish woman is beginning to make her presence more felt in life, and, therefore, the theatre, being the mirror of reality, must show this change. With Tamayo, however, the reason was presumably a personal one, his deep admiration and affection for his mother and his wife. The latter in particular appears to have exerted a great influence on his life and happiness. He dedicated a later edition of Locura de Amor with these words, "Amalia, "esposa mía, angelical enfermera de mis padres y de los "hijos de mis hermanos: quiera Dios que puedas hacer por "mí lo que te vi hacer por otros: quiera Dios que yo "logre la dicha de morir en tus brazos."

(1) Clara in La Bola de Nieve. Cecilia in Lo Positivo.
Doña Candelaria in Lances de Honor. Alicia in
Un Drama Nuevo.

La Bola de Nieve (1856), a three act verse drama, marks the conclusion of the first period of Tamayo's work. Curiously this piece was a reversion to the verse style of some of his former works, but in several other ways it showed fresh development. It was more like some of the works of Bretón de los Herreros or Eguílaz⁽¹⁾, being a study of contemporary society and customs. Tamayo in this drama condemns jealousy, the cause of making love turn to bitterness and hatred. The play begins almost as a comedy, and we enjoy several amusing scenes with small indications of jealousy on the part of two of the characters, Luis and Clara. Things go from bad to worse, and incidents accumulate until the drama culminates in a duel between Luis and Fernando, which, however, does not have a tragic conclusion. As one character says,

"Lo que en un principio cosa
 "De poca entidad juzgamos,
 "Fué como bola de nieve
 "Que crece y crece rodando."⁽²⁾

The versification of this drama is adequate and the atmosphere real, although perhaps rather artificial and

(1) Luis Martínez de Eguílaz y Eguílaz (1830 - 1874).

(2) La Bola de Nieve. Act II. Scene 3, ll. 51-54.

conventional. The intelligence, stagecraft and dramatic skill of the author are all manifest in this work.

During the first period of his productions, Tamayo was gradually withdrawing from the influences of Romanticism to which he had been exposed, and setting himself on new paths of dramatic art which he was henceforth to follow. As early as 1852 Tamayo had his dramatic ideal quite clear in his mind. In his Prologue to Ángela he stated that a dramatic author should have a definite moral aim. By studying and reproducing the vices of contemporary social life, much might be done in the way of reformation. His conception of the stage was, that it resembled a pulpit from which one might preach to the audience, and improve their morals. He expressed his ideas on the subject thus, "En el estado en que la "sociedad se encuentra, es preciso llamarla al camino de "la regeneración, despertando en ella el germen de los "sentimientos generosos; es indispensable luchar con el "egoísmo para vencerlo con el eficaz auxilio de la com- "pasión, virtud la más noble y santa de las virtudes "El teatro puede coadyuvar a esta laudabilísima empresa "con medios no despreciables y el conato de los autores

"dramáticos debe encaminarse a tan altos fines." (1)

Tamayo decided that the drama should serve as a weapon against vice and crime, and he enlisted his Christian convictions to help in the struggle against evil. "Los principios de mi poética dramática se encierran en esta frase: 'Los hombres, y Dios sobre los hombres'." (2) Schiller whom Tamayo in his youth admired so intensely, was always the champion of virtue and high moral ideals. He was endowed with a great love for humanity and a firm belief in the existence and supremacy of a kind deity. It is probable that some of Tamayo's ideas have been inspired, in part at any rate, by those of Schiller. This moralising tone was evident in La Bola de Nieve, but it was from 1862 that it became pronounced, although even in Tamayo's earliest works we always had the idealisation of moral qualities and virtues. Yet from 1862 onwards this attitude of social and religious reformer was much more clearly defined. Tamayo was fearless in his denunciation of whatever custom or idea was not in accordance

(1) Obras de Tamayo y Baus. (Madrid 1898) Prologue to Angela. Vol. I., p.194.

(2) Obras de Tamayo y Baus. (Madrid 1898) Prologue to Angela. Vol. I., p.195.

with his own high moral, religious standard. He risked disfavour with the public on several occasions, and when unpopularity did overtake him, he kept silence for the last twenty-eight⁽¹⁾ years of his life, rather than write plays merely to pander to the public taste, which might not be in keeping with his ideals.

There were other changes also in Tamayo's works, as his talent came to maturity. The action in his plays becomes less dramatic and much simpler, and the number of his characters was reduced to a minimum.⁽²⁾ The author relied less on dramatic artifices and outward effects, and his works took on a more profound tone. There were some able studies of character in several of the later dramas, Tamayo showing considerable skill in this aspect of his work, which had been so neglected by the national Spanish dramatists in the past. Neither the 'Siglo de Oro' masters of the 'comedia' nor the Romantic playwrights were successful in the study of character. The moralising attitude adopted by Tamayo was quite

every way, development of character, thought and dialogue. Instead of being a mere adaptation of the French plays.

(1) 1870 (date of last dramatic production) - 1898 (date of death).

(2) There were only four characters in Lo Positivo (1862).

a natural one in a Spaniard, but his excellence in the development of his characters was something new. With regard to his literary style, his prose changed and progressed with his ideas. It became simpler, clearer, and more concise than before.

In 1858 Tamayo was made a member of the Spanish Academy, and his discourse on his reception into that body was an interesting one. "De la Fuente de Belleza en la Literatura Dramática" was the title of this speech, in which he expounded the theories of the Realistic dramatic school. From that date it was as if he decided to write only works which corresponded with his expressed theories.

In 1862 there was presented Lo Positivo, a three act comedy in prose, which was one of the best and most popular pieces that Tamayo wrote. The idea of the work, but only that, was got from a French comedy, Le Duc Job (1859) by Léon Laya, which was only moderately successful in Paris. The Spanish comedy was a new production in almost every way, development of characters, thought and dialogue. Instead of being a mere adaptation of the French piece, the Spanish one became to all intents and purposes an

original work. It was a strong attack on the materialistic spirit of the age which considered wealth and position as the only things that counted. According to one of the characters, "El Excelentísimo Señor Don "Dinero que es el mayor fatuo del mundo cree que sin él "no puede hacerse nada."⁽¹⁾ After all has been made right and people have seen the foolishness of their ideas, we have the philosophy of Tamayo expressed in the concluding lines of the play, "¡Felices los que tienen "dinero y le dan por el amor de Dios!"⁽²⁾ The plot of the play is simple but is soundly constructed and well developed. The characters are vividly portrayed. Particularly pleasing is Cecilia, attractive even when expounding some of the materialistic theories she has learned from her father. The moral lesson is made perhaps too obvious, but yet the work contains many amusing, entertaining passages. This comedy is lighter and wittier than most of the other works of Tamayo. The prose in which it is written is simple and clear, a fitting

(1) Lo Positivo. Act III. Scene 7, l. 80.

(2) Do. Last two lines of play.

medium for the ideas expressed. To quote Fernández Flórez: "La prosa de Lo Positivo es célebre: es como "túnica de sencillos pliegues, suelta y honesta, que "dibuja las formas esculturalmente: prosa nieta de "Moratín."⁽¹⁾

The year 1863 saw the presentation of one of Tamayo's most serious dramas. It was Lances de Honor and was written in three acts in prose. The theme is a condemnation of the custom of duelling which was so prevalent in Spain of that day. "Cuando un hombre nos "ofende, no hay más remedio que matarle o morir a sus "manos."⁽²⁾ Tamayo's enemies considered this work a crime, and naturally enough the Spanish people, although perhaps inwardly conscious of the evil of the system, nevertheless held fast to tradition and resented the author's bold criticism of one of their cherished customs. Tamayo's attack was impassioned and vigorous. Even on reading the drama we are touched by the desperate words of Don Fabián, who against his will and against his

(1) Autores Dramáticos Contemporáneos. (Madrid 1881).
Isidoro Fernández Flórez. Vol. II., p.473.

(2) Lances de Honor. Act II. Scene 14.

convictions is being forced into fighting a duel. He exclaims, "Pero ¡mi hijo que es tan bueno ...; mi mujer "que tanto me quiere ...; mi Dios que me crió y padeció "por mí muerte de cruz! ... ¡Por eso no me bato por "eso, por eso!"⁽¹⁾ Tamayo spares no effort to convince the supporters of the duelling system that they are ranged against the forces of morality and Christianity. The plot is clear and simple with no unnecessary element intruding itself. There is no love interest in the drama and events move forward impressively to the dread climax when Miguel is killed in a duel by Paulino, his former friend. The end is rather unreal, when the parents of the dead boy, models of Christian resignation, are reconciled to their son's murderer and his parents. These concluding scenes are perhaps over-idealised, unnatural and unconvincing. Elsewhere, the drama is well conceived and the prose style is good. Here Tamayo revealed himself as the fearless champion of Christianity, who dared all for the sake of his ideals and principles.

Only once during his later dramatic career did Tamayo

(1) Lances de Honor. Act II. Scene 7, l. 79.

write a work of pure dramatic passion without any obvious moralising purpose. This was Un Drama Nuevo (1867), which was a three act prose drama and in many respects an amazing work. The scene was laid in England of the year 1605, and we have Shakespeare as one of the eight characters in the piece. The drama is written in prose until near the conclusion, when the tragedy finishes in verse. The characters in this work are moved by the passions of which they are the prey, Alicia and Edmundo by love, Walton by hatred, Tórik by fear and jealousy. These are not merely puppets of the dramatist, but are creatures of flesh and blood who make a strong appeal. The ideas are noble and elevated, the action well developed and the dénouement clever and intensely dramatic. The style is pure and classical. Yet with all its restraint and simplicity, this work reaches a height of dramatic beauty seldom attained by Tamayo in his other works.

After 1870 Tamayo never again wrote for the theatre. This was the date of the presentation of his work Los Hombres de Bien, which was rejected by the public because of the author's strong criticism of their lives. It is

to be deplored that Tamayo stopped writing at the age of forty-one, for at that time he was in the prime of life and probably his productive powers were at their best. Later he devoted himself purely to works of research for the Royal Spanish Academy.

Tamayo y Baus was one of the outstanding dramatists of the nineteenth century. In many ways this author was in the line of direct descent from the national Spanish dramatists. The moral aim of his dramas, the passionate vigour, the stagecraft, the verse style of his earlier works were all according to the best traditions of the Spanish theatre. But, the excellent psychological analysis of character, the depth of his philosophy and the pure, classical prose style, which he adopted later and which was reminiscent of that of Moratín, were novel.

One of the criticisms which might be made against Tamayo is that he considered himself too much as a preacher and too little as a dramatist. Certainly the moral aspect⁽¹⁾ does tend to become obtrusive, but in general the dramas of Tamayo are interesting and

(1) As in Lances de Honor.

entertaining. The author's style sometimes shows traces of artificiality. This fault is probably due to excessive refinement, but it is not often in evidence. One of Tamayo's most obvious defects is his lack of originality in the subjects of his dramas. He constantly borrows ideas and inspiration from one source or another, especially in his earlier works. Nevertheless, we must admit that he shows considerable ingenuity and originality in adapting them, that he breathes into his dramas Spanish atmosphere and spirit, so that in the end his works are in a very real sense his own creations. Tamayo y Baus helped greatly towards the progress of the Spanish theatre in the second half of the nineteenth century. He firmly established the realistic drama of contemporary customs, giving to it a strong moralising tendency and fixing prose as the suitable medium of expression.

The transition drama of this period was also strengthened by the contribution of Ayala⁽¹⁾, whose works were of considerable interest and value, although of less

(1) Adelardo López de Ayala (1828 - 1879).

importance than those of Tamayo. Ayala wrote some lyric poems which showed beauty of form, rather than depth of thought. It is not, however, for these that he is remembered, but for his dramatic productions. He read and studied with enthusiasm the works of the 'Siglo de Oro' authors and was an admirer of Calderón, with whose 'comedias' he was very familiar, and whose spirit influenced him especially during the first part of his life. His earliest dramas⁽¹⁾ were strong and vigorous but very unequal and of little worth. After his arrival in Madrid he had his first important play presented. It was called El Hombre de Estado (1851) and was very well received. This drama was followed by others⁽²⁾ of the same type, historical in character and exalting certain virtues such as heroism and devotion to duty. It is not, however, the productions of this first period of Ayala's life that interest us, but those which were written later.

(1) E.g. *Salga por donde Saliere. Me voy a Sevilla. La Corona y el Puñal.*

(2) *Los Dos Guzmanes* (1851). *Rioja* (1854).

In 1857 there appeared El Tejado de Vidrio, a drama dealing with contemporary society, and the first of the quartette⁽¹⁾ which formed Ayala's real contribution towards the progress of the theatre of the period. The culminating point of his productions was Consuelo, which was successfully presented in 1878. This was the work of his mature experience and probably the best of all his plays.

In the dramas of his later period Ayala considered it the proper procedure to concentrate on the description of modern life in Spain. Other countries might offer interesting dramatic themes, but these did not attract Ayala who confined himself to the truthful reproduction of the contemporary society of his own country. Thus the atmosphere of his plays is very national. It is the Spain of his day and generation which he presents to us with contemporary interests and people. Ayala bids us enter a Spanish home of the period, introduces us to the members of the family and the servants, and makes us acquainted with all the problems and

(1) El Tejado de Vidrio (1857). El Tanto por Ciento (1861). El Nuevo Don Juan (1863). Consuelo (1878).

difficulties of their lives. These dramas could have been written by no other than a Spaniard who closely observed and faithfully reproduced the customs and society of the Spain he knew.

Although the atmosphere of Ayala's dramas is national, yet there is to be found in them something which makes general appeal. The persons described are certainly nineteenth century Spaniards, but nevertheless they are moved by human passions common to men of any age. The vices which are condemned are not peculiar to any special period but may exist in any country at any time. In his dramatic writing Ayala employs the didactic method, and in each of his later works he points a very clear moral. His desire is to educate the people morally by means of his works. In El Tejado de Vidrio the author shows how often an evil practice injures the person who employs it. In Tanto Por Ciento we have a bitter condemnation of the desire for material wealth, which corrupts the hearts of humanity and ruins their happiness. The other two works are written in a similar vein. With this type of dramatic production, the danger is that the didactic

tendency may be over-emphasised; and this is what happened in the dramas of Ayala, who made the moralising note too obvious.

This author's plays were interesting because of their accuracy of detail and their soundness of construction. The central idea of the drama and then the characters were conceived; later every scene was worked out in great detail, due consideration being given to the reasoned, logical development of the action and the psychological revelation of character. After this solid framework was conscientiously built up, then and only then was the play⁽¹⁾ written. As a result we cannot help admiring the soundness of the dramatic structure, the good characterisation, the accuracy and consistency employed in the production of Ayala's works.

Consuelo is generally considered as the climax of Ayala's literary career. It is a masterly description of the misery and unhappiness brought upon Consuelo and those whose lives are bound up with hers, by her ambition

(1) It is not, therefore, a matter for surprise that Ayala wrote comparatively few works.

and folly in rejecting the hand of the excellent Fernando and marrying a rich profligate whom she did not love. In conversation with her mother she says,

"Es verdad: le di mi mano
"Sin amarle." (1)

The piece consists of three acts and is written in verse. It is rather amazing to note how many⁽²⁾ scenes are contained in each act. The first one shows us the events which lead up to the rejection of one lover and the acceptance of the unworthy suitor. The second and third acts present subsequent developments and the gradual beginning of Consuelo's suspicions, as she exclaims,

"¡Ah, madre! La primer duda,
"¡Qué de fantasmas engendra!" (3)

There follow the estrangement between the two married people, the effort of Consuelo to arouse Ricardo's jealousy by writing a note to her former lover, and finally the desertion of Consuelo by her husband.

(1) Act II. Scene 3, ll. 261, 262.

(2) 17 Scenes in Act I. 21 Scenes in Act II.
11 Scenes in Act III.

(3) Act II. Scene 3, ll. 189, 190.

Fernando, who at last sees through Consuelo's fickleness and shallowness, abandons her also, and the final blow comes in the shape of her mother's sudden death. So, just punishment overtakes her, and the curtain falls as she exclaims,

"¡Muerta! ¡Dios mío!
"¡Qué espantosa soledad!"(1)

There is no possibility of mistaking the moral purpose of Consuelo.

The drama is in the true Spanish tradition in that tragedy and comedy are mingled, although the greater part of the piece is serious, and it ends on a very tragic note. The comic element is supplied by the two servants Rita and Lorenzo. Certain of the scenes⁽²⁾ in which these two take part are amusing and serve to lighten the drama considerably. The characters are natural and well drawn. Consuelo herself is clearly pictured in her selfishness and her love for wealth and position. We are shown how this defect in her character was fostered in her youth by her attendance at a

(1) Act III. Scene 11, last two lines.

(2) Act II. Scene 1. Act III. Scenes 1 and 2.

of Consuelo by her husband and views the miserable state in which she is to drag out the rest of her existence. His parting words are,

"Vivirás
 "Como tantas, como tantas,
 "Cercada de ostentación,
 "Alma muerta, vida loca,
 "Con la sonrisa en la boca
 "Y el hielo en el corazón." (1)

The play was successfully written in verse of varied metres. In Ayala's very early works the form was poor and showed irregularity and incorrectness. But as the years passed it improved beyond all recognition, and the author came to possess an elegant style which was one of his greatest assets. It was typically national in form with its varied metres, its vigour and picturesqueness. Yet it also had a sobriety, conciseness and naturalness, which were not characteristic of the old 'Siglo de Oro' writers. His choice of words was apt and his dialogue bright and animated. The thoughts of his characters were simply clothed in suitable words. Ayala may have been criticised for writing his works in metre, but one

(1) Act III. Scene 10, 11. 766-771.

often forgets that one is reading verse, so natural does the ordinary, everyday conversation sound.

Antonia: "¡Ay, Rita! más te quisiera,
"Si hablaras menos.

Rita: "¿Qué importa?
"Nadie nos oye; ni usted,
"Consigo yo que me oiga
"las más veces."(1)

On other occasions⁽²⁾, however, Ayala can rise to great heights when he wishes to express deep emotion.

Ayala had much to recommend him, his realistic description of contemporary social life, his high moral aim and his elegant literary style. Yet he lacked depth, creative power and great originality of thought. He was inclined to be superficial, and his works compared unfavourably with the dramas of Tamayo. Nevertheless at this transition stage Ayala also contributed considerably towards the evolution of modern Spanish drama.

The realistic, moralising type of dramatic production was also favoured by other authors⁽³⁾ of the period,

(1) Act I. Scene 1, ll. 51-55.

(2) E.g. Act II. Scene 20, and Act III. Scene 8.

(3) Luis Martínez de Eguílaz y Eguílaz (1830 - 1874).
Narciso Serra (1830 - 1877).

but their efforts were not crowned with any great or lasting success. The two prominent writers of this genre were Tamayo and Ayala who carried out a great improvement in the drama and standardised it in its new form. Tamayo ceased writing for the theatre in 1870 and Ayala produced his last work in 1878; but years before the latter date there were clear indications of the lines which the subsequent theatrical productions were to follow.

The Spanish drama was evolving and developing in certain new directions. There was greater simplicity of plot, better delineation of character and more realism. Yet, in certain respects it could not conceal its ancestry, for the whole atmosphere, the spirit and the humour were typically national. The mingling of the tragic and comic elements was according to the tradition of the 'Siglo de Oro comedia'. The vigour of treatment and the moralising tendency were among the original characteristics of the national Spanish 'comedia' preserved in the transition drama as written by Tamayo and Ayala.

P A R T 2.

CHAPTER IV.NEO-ROMANTICISM (1874-1898).

Towards the end of the nineteenth century there appeared in Europe a new type of drama, inspired by Ibsen. This theatre was principally one of ideas presented in such a way as to stimulate thought; its themes were generally ethical or sociological in relation to a definite philosophy of life, and its action depended on problems and psychological conflicts. A special technique was required in the construction of such plays. When the curtain rose, much of the story had already taken place, and past events were gradually revealed as the drama progressed. The action was concentrated and developed quickly, many of the incidents, especially the unpleasant ones, happening off stage. The literary style was modernised; 'asides' and long soliloquies were abolished, and the 'confidant' and the 'raisonneur' disappeared.

This movement spread rapidly through northern Europe, making itself felt particularly in France⁽¹⁾, Germany⁽²⁾ and England⁽³⁾, where theatres were opened for the purpose of bringing works of the new type before the public. In Spain, however, there was no theatre established expressly to propagate the new theories, but the individual taste of each dramatist decided how far he was to be influenced by the ideals of contemporary foreign dramatic thought and to what extent he was to continue to follow Spanish tradition. A few of the Spanish dramatists who wrote at the very end of the nineteenth century, were impressed by the ideas, technique and style of the modern theatre and introduced certain of the new conceptions of dramatic art into their works. But these authors cannot be studied collectively, for they reacted to the new movement in different ways. The traces of its influence must be sought in each individual Spanish dramatist.

(1) The 'Théâtre Libre' was established in 1887 by Andre Antoine.

(2) The 'Freie Bühne' opened in 1889.

(3) The 'Independent Theatre' was founded in 1891 by J. T. Grein.

The turbulent reign of Isabel II. came to a sudden end with the Revolution of 1868, and for the subsequent six years⁽¹⁾ unsettled conditions prevailed in Spain. It would appear as if these political disturbances had a very far-reaching effect, even influencing the mood of the people. There was a consequent change in the taste of the theatre-going Spaniard, who turned from the sober, realistic dramatic works of the preceding few years⁽²⁾, and demanded something more stirring, more violent and more heroic. Most of the productions of the last twenty-five years of the nineteenth century differed considerably from those of both Tamayo and Ayala. The Spanish theatre of the period appeared to be mainly represented by works which showed a retrograde tendency.

The dramatic productions of one man were of interest to the public of the time. This writer was Echegaray⁽³⁾. His splendid isolation was due in part to his skill in

(1) Until 1874 when Alfonso XII. came to the throne.

(2) Tamayo did not write for the theatre after 1868 and Ayala's last work appeared in 1878.

(3) José Echegaray y Eizaguirre (1832 - 1916).

satisfying the demands made by the public, but also to the lack of other talented dramatists. The first production⁽¹⁾ of the author was not given until 1874, when Echegaray was over forty years of age, a man of maturity and wide experience. He had been in turn engineer, mathematician, scientist, economist and politician, but all through his career he had been greatly interested in the drama. He had studied the works of Calderón and Shakespeare. Later he read the productions of Zorrilla and other Spanish Romanticists, and those of many French⁽²⁾ dramatists. One of his greatest pleasures and relaxations was to attend the theatre. He witnessed the successful performance of Ayala's first play, and he was present at many of the triumphs of Tamayo. Echegaray has confessed⁽³⁾ that in his youth he wrote a drama which he burned, as he was unable to find anyone willing to produce it. At intervals he composed other plays, destroying at least one effort but preserving several⁽⁴⁾ which

(1) El Libro Talonario, a verse comedy in one act.

(2) Hugo, Dumas (fils), Sardou.

(3) Echegaray. Olmet y Carraffa. (Madrid 1912) p.45.

(4) La Hija Natural produced as Para tal Culpa tal Pena (1877). Un Sol que Nace y un Sol que Muere (1876). Morir por no Despertar (1879).

were successfully presented later. It was only a chance happening that served to introduce the author to the Spanish stage. In 1873 Echegaray was exiled for political reasons, and on his return from Paris he brought with him a one act comedy which he arranged to have presented. The alleged playwright who was supposed to be abroad, was called Jorge Hayaseca⁽¹⁾. The play was successful, and the real name of the author was revealed. This was the beginning of the dramatic career of Echegaray who was destined to keep the Spanish theatre supplied with his productions for more than thirty years.

The author's works were primarily Romantic. Although the day of Romanticism had passed and the Spanish public had turned from its dramatic productions about the middle of the century, its spirit clearly reappeared in the dramas of this neo-Romantic writer. The movement had ceased, but this one belated exponent of its theories enjoyed great popularity. This is not surprising, since, to quote Aubrey Bell, "There has always been a tendency "in Spain for schools to fall to pieces, while the

(1) Anagram for José Echegaray.

"individual writers and thinkers remain and flourish."⁽¹⁾
 On reading the works of Echegaray, we are reminded of 'Siglo de Oro' dramatists, especially of Calderón, and of Spanish Romantic authors. At times we may even trace some resemblance to the French Romantic theatre, as represented by Victor Hugo, with regard to treatment of theme and characterisation. Although this writer was fundamentally a Romantic and in most ways sought inspiration from the past, yet there were other elements to be found in his productions. As early as 1876 signs were to be noted of the influence of the French theatre of the period, particularly that of Sardou, with its melodrama, tangled plots and conflicts of passion and will. Still later, about the year 1890, there were to be seen certain traces of Ibsen's theories.

Echegaray was characteristically Spanish in fertility and versatility of production. In all he composed some sixty-five plays of different lengths and varying styles. Frequently three or four of his productions were successfully presented in one year⁽²⁾. The author's

(1) Contemporary Spanish Literature. Aubrey Bell.
 (London 1926) p.31.

(2) E.g. O Locura o Santidad)
 Iris de Paz)
 Para tal Culpa tal Pena) in 1877.
 Lo que no Puede Decirse)

works may be divided into two categories, historical and contemporary. The former consisted of period dramas⁽¹⁾, in which are described valiant heroes who have happiness snatched from them and meet their fate in the shape of violent death or suicide, because they answer the call of duty or honour. These were written in true Romantic style and contained much of the spirit and atmosphere of the works of some of the nineteenth century Romantic dramatists, particularly Zorrilla. The other type⁽²⁾ of production which gave better results, dealt with the problems, conflicts and tragedies of contemporary Spanish society. Here was an opportunity for Echegaray to break away from Romanticism. He was under its sway in the production of his period dramas, but it served no purpose in his studies of modern life. He might have used Tamayo y Baus as a model for realistic reproduction of contemporary society, but Echegaray's genius was of a different type and did not lend itself to restraint and accuracy. A prolific

(1) *La Esposa del Vengador* (1874). *En el Puño de la Espada* (1875). *En el Seno de la Muerte* (1879) and others.

(2) *O Locura o Santidad* (1877). *El Gran Galeoto* (1881). These are the two best.

writer, he had little time to modify or limit his natural gifts. We find, then, the author carried his Romanticism even into his modern dramas. Admittedly there were realistic tendencies in his productions of this type, most evident in some of his later and more successful⁽¹⁾ works.

The majority of the dramas of this author depend upon some conflict. This may arise from a situation in which the chief character contends with adverse accidental circumstances, or with the institutions⁽²⁾ of society. On the other hand the individual may be forced by duty and moral obligation to follow a certain path, while his desires and affections lead him in a contrary direction. No matter what the cost may be, he must choose the high moral ideal with its nobility of heroic sacrifice rather than the easy alternative of inclination. We witness the conflict between man's duty and his desire and listen to the words which reveal his struggles. All this is edifying but at times rather

(1) Especially in his best drama, El Gran Galeoto.

(2) Compare with Ibsen.

unpleasant. Some of the dramas⁽¹⁾ are obviously 'pièces à thèse' and point a moral. Others are not designed with any such definite purpose, but they also conform generally to a high ethical standard.

Many of Echegaray's dramas have as their central theme the old Spanish conception of honour. The idea is that a woman who allows her honour to be stained must pay the penalty. This aspect of the question is closely bound up with that of the husband's duty, which is to avenge any lack of fidelity on the part of his wife. The plot of the melodramatic play Mariana (1892) is based on this idea. The heroine deliberately weds Pablo, a stern general, who promises to defend his honour to the death. After the marriage Daniel, her former lover, appears and makes every endeavour to induce her to leave with him. Knowing she is on the point of agreeing, Mariana summons her husband and confesses to him her love for Daniel. The inevitable, horrible climax follows. Pablo shoots his bride and the two men go out to fight a duel in which presumably Daniel is killed. This

(1) El Gran Galeoto (1881). Siempre en Ridículo (1890).

idea occurs also in several other⁽¹⁾ dramas of Echegaray and is treated in different ways. But the conclusion hardly ever varies, the sinner being punished with great suffering or with death. In his uncompromising attitude and his severity of judgment in questions of this type, Echegaray reminds us of Calderón.

In Echegaray's work we discover another trait which is typically Spanish. Great emphasis was laid on the action and on the creation of situations. It was the moral problem or central idea of the drama which first presented itself to the author's mind. To illustrate this, he created the principal character or characters, and then a limited number of subordinate figures took shape. The stage was now set and the action began. Strings were pulled, situations created, problems set forth, solutions devised, and finally the tragic dénouement was presented. Echegaray himself has described his method of dramatic composition in a sonnet which says,

(1) Como Empieza y Como Acaba (1876). Algunas Veces Aquí (1878). En el Seno de la Muerte (1879).

"Escojo una pasión, tomo una idea:
 "Un problema, un carácter. Y lo infundo
 "Cual densa dinamita, en lo profundo
 "De un personaje que mi mente crea.
 "La trama, al personaje le rodea
 "De unos cuantos muñecos que en el mundo
 "O se revuelcan o en el cieno inmundo
 "O se calientan a la luz febea.
 "La mecha enciendo. El fuego se propaga,
 "El cartucho revienta sin remedio,
 "Y el astro principal es quien lo paga.
 "Aunque a veces también en este asedio
 "Que al arte pongo y que al instinto halaga,
 "Me coge la explosión de medio a medio." (1)

We can understand, therefore, that the situations were generally artificial and unnatural; they were created for a definite purpose and were not taken from life.

Even less satisfactory were the characters which were presented. There have been very few Spanish dramatists who have been expert psychologists, and certainly Echegaray was not one of them. His characters are not drawn with sympathetic insight or truth, and it is evident that the author either did not understand the workings of the human mind, or could not satisfactorily reproduce them. The people in his dramas are generally unreal. They are either very noble or very wicked. They act and speak unnaturally, professing sentiments

(1) Echegaray. Olmet y Carraffa. (Madrid 1912) p.182.

which they do not seem to feel. When a crisis arises, they scream, shout and declaim in a frenzied way, but their emotion is strained and artificial. With few exceptions, the characters appear as hysterical, excitable, violent figures who give no impression of reality.

Pessimism and tragedy are the dominating notes of almost all Echegaray's dramas. Humorous interludes are few, and the humour is almost always obscured by the gloomy atmosphere. The beginning of a work may be pleasant and peaceful, but we know that a storm is approaching. Within the first few scenes tragedy casts its shadow over the picture. There are presentations of deaths, duels, murders, torture, and madness mostly on the stage. Suffering and misery are apparent on all sides; horror follows horror and violence stalks abroad. The members of the audience must have been affected by the ugly scenes they were called upon to witness. At times the dramas rise to lofty heights, but more often they descend to depths of sensational melodrama filled with exaggeration and extravagance.

It is apparent that Echegaray approached the theatre in somewhat the same way as he approached a mathematical

(1) Approximately half of his plays were in verse and the other half in prose.

or an engineering problem, for his dramas were well developed and constructed. The many entanglements of the story were satisfactorily worked out, and the whole plot was brought to a conclusion with consummate skill. The author was an adept at obtaining good curtains, and in most of his three act dramas each of the sections had an extremely effective conclusion. His scenic effects were well studied, and altogether his dramatic technique was outstandingly good.

Echegaray's literary style was not one of his assets. He shone neither as a poet nor as a prose writer, although possibly his prose was superior. His verse was colourful and strong, but it was not at all harmonious. He probably had difficulty with versification and thus, although his verse resembled that of the Romantic dramatists, it lacked the facility, beauty and melody which we always associate with the works of the latter. Most of Echegaray's later dramas were written in prose⁽¹⁾ which had a certain force and strength about it, although it was not always regular, correct or pleasant to the ear. The author made frequent use of 'asides'

(1) Approximately half of his plays were in verse and the other half in prose.

and long soliloquies in his works, and his style was rhetorical and declamatory.

The two best dramas of Echegaray both deal with contemporary Spanish society. They are O Locura o Santidad, which was successfully presented in 1877, and El Gran Galeoto which was acclaimed four years later. The former play presents a moral conflict which takes place in the soul of the chief character, Don Lorenzo. It is intended that from the outset we should associate him with Don Quixote. When the first curtain rises, Lorenzo is shown reading a passage from Cervantes' masterpiece and meditating upon the hero and his apparent madness, "¡Locura, ir con el alma tras lo ideal por el áspero y prosaico camino de las realidades humanas, que es tanto como correr tras una estrella del cielo por entre peñascales y abrojos! Locura es, según afirman los doctores;"(1) Meanwhile Don Tomás, the family physician and friend, strikes a warning note, "Mientras el cerebro se agita en sublimes espasmos, la locura acecha." (2) Thus from the very beginning we

(1) Act I. Scene 1.

(2) Act I. Scene 2.

are made to feel the gloom of impending misfortune. The atmosphere seems to brighten⁽¹⁾ for a little, but soon⁽²⁾ the shadows fall again, and this time they do not lift. Eduardo must have had some dark foreboding, when he said, "¿Por qué viene esa negra nube a empañar 'el azul de nuestro cielo?'"⁽³⁾ The moral conflict between Lorenzo's sense of honour and his desires commences at the end of the first act and continues throughout the second act. In addition the hero has also to stand firm against the anger and the pleading of his family and his friends. There occurs a long, painful scene⁽⁴⁾ between the hero and his wife Ángela, who employs every possible method in an attempt to persuade her husband to abandon the course upon which he has decided. But Lorenzo spoke truly when he said of himself on a previous occasion, "No, Tomás, cuando la idea del bien me sostiene, mi 'voluntad es de hierro,'"⁽⁵⁾ and he does not yield even

(1) Act I. Scenes 3, 4, 5.

(2) Act I. Scene 6.

(3) Act I. Scene 6.

(4) Act II. Scene 4.

(5) Act I. Scene 3.

to the entreaties of his beloved daughter Inés. The third act skilfully unfolds the events which lead up to the terrible climax. Although from the first scene of this act we vaguely sense what is to happen, yet we are kept in suspense right to the final fall of the curtain, when Lorenzo is dragged away to an asylum and we are left wondering 'si el heroico sacrificio del implacable sabio es locura o santidad'.⁽¹⁾

This drama centres upon the psychological conflict which takes place in the mind of Don Lorenzo. Thus far the work may be considered as being modern in conception and resembling the products of the French⁽²⁾ school. Nevertheless the atmosphere, the action and the situations are extremely Romantic throughout. One episode treated in real Romantic style is Juana's death⁽³⁾, which takes place slowly and painfully in view of the members of the audience. The lighting effects also are largely conceived according to the theories of Romanticism. Dim⁽⁴⁾

(1) Act III. Scene 5.

(2) Particularly Sardou.

(3) Act II. Scenes 8, 9, 10.

(4) Act II. Scene 5. The gloom and shadows in the room symbolise the gloom and darkness which have descended on Don Lorenzo.

light or darkness⁽¹⁾ relieved only by the light of the fire add to the awesomeness of certain incidents. The characterisation is weak and in accordance with the tradition of the Romantic theatre rather than according to modern standards. The people presented to us are shadowy and unreal. Don Lorenzo, the hero, is a man who loves his family, but who values duty and honour more highly than their well-being. Apart from these facts, we know little about him. Don Tomás, Inés, Ángela, and the others are artificial beings, created merely to intensify Don Lorenzo's struggles. The only character of any reality at all is Juana, the old nurse, who appears to be moved by deep, maternal love.

Regarding the dramatic form, the play is composed of three well balanced acts, within which the action is presented, developed and concluded. The curtain at the end of each of the first two acts is effective, and the tragic dénouement is well presented. This was the first drama which Echegaray wrote in prose and, unfortunately, the style is far from being satisfactory. The prose is

(1) Act II. Scene 9 (end). "Sólo queda iluminada la habitación por el reflejo rojizo de la chimenea."

strong and vigorous but uneven. The phrases used are short, jerky and inharmonious, and contain many questions and exclamations. There are scenes⁽¹⁾ in the play where most of the dialogue is written in this unnatural way,

Juana: "¡Hijo de mis entrañas!

Don Lorenzo: "¡Eso eso!

Juana: "¡Yo muero!

Don Lorenzo: "¡No ... madre mía!

Duquesa: "¡Jesús mil veces! ¡Ese hombre va
"a matarla! ... ¡Socorro!

Ángela: "¡Eduardo! ¡Tomás!

Don Lorenzo: "¡Madre! ¡Madre!

Juana: "No Dios mío No ... ¡eso no!"⁽²⁾

At other times the characters indulge in soliloquies and hold the stage, delivering long monologues.⁽³⁾ His literary style is far from modern, and there are few signs of progress in this respect.

(1) Act II. Scenes 9 and 10.

(2) Act II. Scene 9.

(3) Act I. Scene 4. Act II. Scene 1. Act II.
Scene 5.

The most discussed and most widely praised drama of the author is undoubtedly El Gran Galeoto (1881), which is a 'pièce à thèse'. Its subject, that irreparable harm may be unintentionally caused by idle gossip, is of universal interest. Throughout the play the proposition is well sustained and is kept constantly before the members of the audience, for whom finally the moral is conclusively established. Here again, as in many other didactic works, the question arises as to whether rather much emphasis has not been laid on the thesis to the detriment of the purely dramatic side of the piece. Echegaray's technique is good, and the action of the play, which consists of a prologue and three acts, is well developed. Many of the situations are Romantic, but there is less obvious melodrama⁽¹⁾ here than in the majority of the author's other productions. The prologue and the first act are fairly natural, and the characters appear more like real people. Nevertheless there still remain many traces of Romanticism, which become more evident in the later parts of the work.

(1) For example, Don Julián's death which takes place off stage (end of Act III.)

The prologue is written in prose and the acts in verse. There is nothing new to add with regard to the literary style, which is poor, and shows the same faults of unnatural dialogue and declamation.

Dramas continued to be produced by Echegaray until 1905 when he composed his last work for the stage. The same characteristics continued to reveal themselves in the author's later works, for apart from a few small concessions to new dramatic theories, Echegaray's art was not progressive. Indeed the culminating point of his production was reached in 1881 with El Gran Galeoto, and nothing so good appeared after that date. There was, however, one interesting production, El Hijo de Don Juan (1892), which was inspired by Ghosts. The theme was the same as Ibsen's and the moral purpose of the drama was to show the misery, the ill-health and the madness, which appeared to curse the offspring of a 'Don Juan'. This play fell far short of its model. Echegaray showed only a national conception of the problem, and the Romantic atmosphere and the melodramatic conclusion compared very unfavourably with the realism and universal truth of the original.

contribution of this much discussed neo-Romantic author.

Several⁽¹⁾ works were written by authors who imitated Echegaray, but the most important was Juan José which was presented with great success in 1895. Its author, Dicenta⁽²⁾, wrote other⁽³⁾ dramas, but he is remembered for this one great triumph which was instantaneous and complete. The tragedy is set in a new social 'milieu' and has as characters men and women of the working class of Madrid. Their drab lives, their poverty and misery are vividly described. The hero himself explains it all, "Mucho trabajo y muchas fatigas, "y un jornal escaso, ganao sobre los tablones mal unidos, "tiritando de frío en invierno, abrasándome la piel en "verano, afanándome desde la mañana a la noche, ..."⁽⁴⁾ All this suffering and hardship, however, is redeemed by good comradeship and by the willingness⁽⁵⁾ of each of the

(1) El Nudo Gordiano (1878) by Sellés. La Mariposa (1879) by Cano.

(2) Joaquín Dicenta (1863 - 1917).

(3) El Suicidio de Werther (1888). Los Irresponsables (1890). El Crimen de Ayer (1904, and many others.

(4) Act I. Scene 4.

(5) Act II. Scene 8.

downtrodden members of society to help the other in times of distress. This constitutes one side of the picture. On the other side appears Paco, the representative of capitalism with all his superiority and self-sufficiency. He is carelessly generous and confident that there is nothing which he desires which wealth cannot buy. Here we have 'la blusa y la levita frente a frente',⁽¹⁾ and a clever contrast is made between the representatives of the two classes, although it is evident that the virtues of the workers are accentuated, while the worst possible type of capitalist is presented. It is no difficult matter to see with which body the author's sympathies lie. Later⁽²⁾ in the drama the heartbreaking struggles of the unemployed are presented with great detail and accuracy. Starving and hopeless, but willing to work, they can find no man who will employ them. All the details of this setting are worked out with care and accuracy, and there is a considerable amount of realism in the description of the social conditions,

(1) Teatro Español Contemporáneo. Manuel Bueno.
(Madrid 1909) p.114.

(2) Act II.

in the costumes and in the language used by the members of the working class.

Yet there is more Romanticism than realism to be found in this drama. The whole atmosphere, the action and the characters are Romantic. Echegaray's influence is visible and although that author concerned himself with the violent passions of the middle class, those of the working class as described by Dicenta are equally Romantic. The whole tragedy depends on love and vengeance. Juan José kills Paco because he took the woman he loved and not because he was his employer. The drama is not the story of labour avenging itself on capital, but the story of a crime of passion. Many of the situations of the play and especially its conclusion are conceived and treated in true Romantic style. At the end Juan José deliberately challenges Paco and kills him. After accomplishing his purpose, he reappears on the stage and strangles Rosa. When urged by his friend Andrés to flee, the hero says, "¡Huir! ... ¿Y pa qué voy a huir? ... ¿Qué libro con huir? ... ¡La vida! ¡Mi vida era esto, y lo he matao!"⁽¹⁾ Thus three lives

(1) Act III. Scene 8, last three lines.

are sacrificed because of the ambition and fickleness of Rosa and the selfish desires of Paco. The end is dramatic and terrible, yet artistic and logical.

The play is developed and carried through in three acts. The first act, which ends dramatically, serves to introduce all the characters to us and to begin the real dramatic action. Thereafter, the story moves swiftly and strongly through the second act, with its intensely dramatic scenes between Juan José and Rosa, to its moving yet inevitable end. The characters are all vividly drawn, especially that of Juan José, whose apparent coarseness is contrasted with his natural generosity, honesty and kindness. He is a man possessed of clear vision, great determination and deep passion. The drama is written in simple, concise prose. The dialogue is good, there being very few 'asides' and long soliloquies. Sometimes, we find Juan José giving moderately long⁽¹⁾ speeches, but these are generally interesting and necessary for the proper appreciation of some point in the story. The stage directions are very full

(1) Act I. Scene 4.

indeed, occurring with great detail at the beginning of each act, and also appearing in the middle of scenes and elsewhere, whenever required. The author was quite determined that the drama would be produced in accordance with his desires and he made these manifest throughout. On the occasion of the effective curtain at the end of the first act, Dicenta even gave instructions for the position to be taken by each character on the stage.

This drama was an interesting production for it showed originality and talent. In addition to the Romanticism which permeated the work, we find also definite traces of realism. The prose in which the drama was written was generally free from rhetorical effects and artificiality. It may be said that Juan José, although admittedly Romantic, was more progressive in form and method than any of the works of Echegaray.

Eighteen hundred and ninety-eight was not the date which marked the actual beginning of the contemporary Spanish drama, for traces of it were seen before that year. Works⁽¹⁾ by new authors made their appearance

(1) El Nido Ajeno by Benavente (1894). El Ojito Dereche by the brothers Quintero (1897).

and, although these were inferior in comparison with some of their later productions, yet they served to show even at that early date that the drama in Spain was not going to develop along the lines of Echegaray's melodramatic works, but that it was rather going to link up with the art of Tamayo y Baus and carry realism forward into the twentieth century. The dramas⁽¹⁾ which were of most importance at this time were the productions of Galdós⁽²⁾. This author was well known as a novelist, and it was only at the age of forty-nine that his first play⁽³⁾ was successfully presented. Yet it appears that this turning to dramatic art was an expression of a great desire, which had possessed the author's mind in his early youth, and was not a completely new idea. Galdós himself has confirmed this fact for he has said, "Sin embargo, el género literario que más me seducía, por el que sentía mayores entusiasmos y el que cultivé primero, como lo cultivan todos los jóvenes que empiezan porque parece el más brillante y el de exitos

(1) Seven dramas were produced between 1892 and 1896. His greatest success was Electra (1901) in which much symbolism was present.

(2) Benito Pérez Galdós (1843-1920).

(3) *Realidad* (1892).

"más halagadores, era el género dramático. En el teatro tenía puesta mi ilusión."⁽¹⁾ He wrote a verse⁽²⁾ drama when he was about twenty-three, but he was not able to find anyone to produce it. Thus he was forced by circumstances to transfer his attention to another branch of literature. But it is likely that Galdós retained his interest in the theatre, and followed the career of Echegaray with wonder, if not with growing uneasiness. A chance introduction⁽³⁾ to a manager of a Madrid theatre was the means of bringing a play by this author before the public. Galdós dramatised one of his novels which had been written in dialogue form, and in 1892 the drama Realidad was successfully presented. It is worth noting that although the public gave the play a good reception, some of the critics did not seem to be favourably impressed.

A great contrast is evident between the exaggerated melodramatics of Echegaray and the quietness and sobriety

(1) Galdós. Olmet y Carraffa. (Madrid 1912) p.29.

(2) La Expulsión de los Moriscos.

(3) At end of 1891.

of Galdós. It is almost as if the latter had set out to show that the theatre now had need of calmness and dignity. In spite of the restraint, however, there is a depth and a passion in the works which make a great impression and there are some really humorous episodes. The author's plays deal with contemporary Spain and the lives and problems of her inhabitants. The atmosphere is Spanish, and we find in the dramas evidence of Galdós' deep love of his native country and his sincere desire for her advancement. The characters presented are human and natural, having been drawn with penetration and sympathy by one who had a good understanding of humanity. The men and women in his dramas are real human beings, many of whom⁽¹⁾ we can clearly picture in our mind.

The theatre of Galdós is essentially one of ideas and propaganda. He wishes to instruct the public and inspire them with new ideals. In the campaign of social reform, we see the influence of Ibsen in certain of the theories which appear in the Spanish author's dramas. The latter believes that the individual should live his

(1) Isidora in Voluntad. Don José in La de San Quintín.
It is to be noted that only works before 1898
are being discussed.

life to the full, making the best of his talents and breaking away, if necessary, from the environment in which he has been brought up, in order to make himself a useful member of the community. According to Galdós, the aristocracy of birth, so often associated with idleness and penury, must be replaced by the aristocracy⁽¹⁾ of hard work and success.

There is present also in the author's works the conception of truthfulness as the chief virtue. The idea is evident in La de San Quintín when Rosario⁽²⁾, sure of her own conviction on this point and having ascertained that her lover's coincides with hers, decides to reveal the secret of Victor's birth and thus apparently to ruin him. In Los Condenados also Salomé utters the words, '¡la mentira! que es lo que más he odiado siempre'.⁽³⁾ We can also trace Ibsen's philosophy in the latter drama, which depends on the idea that love must not be denied. The tragedy could never have

(1) This idea is presented in La de San Quintín (1894): Voluntad (1895).

(2) End of Act II.

(3) Act I. Scene 10.

happened unless Paternoy in giving judgment, had decided in accordance with this theory in the words, 'Que se cumpla la ley de amor'.⁽¹⁾

Galdós' theatre differs in technique from that of other authors. He tells us definitely that his dramatic art is closely related to that which he used to employ in writing his novels. He considers that those two fields of literature have more in common than would generally appear, and therefore he attempts to evolve a type of dramatic production which comes nearer to that of the novel. As a result the author's dramatic technique is original but rather inferior. The limits of the theatre appear to be too confined for the large number of ideas which he wishes to express. In certain of the works of Galdós the first part seems to drag considerably, the exposition⁽²⁾ being unnecessarily full and unskilfully presented from the dramatic point of view. It would have been satisfactory in a novel, but it falls far short of the conciseness so necessary for a successful drama.

(1) Act I. Scene 14.

(2) Act I. of La de San Quentín which falls short of the requirements of the theatre.

Frequently also throughout the play the action has a tendency to develop too slowly. It is obvious whether the story is tending, but it moves towards its conclusion in a deliberate way that is either very boring or very irritating. The acts are divided into a large number of small scenes, which tend to break the continuity of the action. Galdós writes his dramas in prose which is effectively simple, pleasant and unrheterical. The dialogue, however, is neither crisp nor dramatic enough; it is as slow-moving as the action. Some of the speeches of characters are over-long, but there are few 'asides', indeed hardly more than are actually necessary. One interesting point in technique is that, in accordance with the tendency⁽¹⁾ of modern drama, the stage directions in the plays of Galdós are much fuller and much more informative. When one considers Galdós' dramatic technique, it is difficult to imagine how the attention of the members of a Spanish audience can have been held. His works are very interesting to read, but the many ideas which they contain are not presented in such a way as to make much appeal on the stage.

(1) As in Ibsen and his followers. In the English drama this tendency is shown very clearly in Shaw and Barrie.

Several⁽¹⁾ of the earlier works of Galdós were well received, and two⁽²⁾ of these were especially successful. Yet the public was never wildly enthusiastic about his dramas; indeed it may have accepted some of them simply because they were by Galdós, the national novelist. Voluntad was coolly received, and Los Condenados was a definite failure in Madrid both with public and critics, although it was quite successful later when presented in the provinces. This failure may have been due to lack of sympathy with the theme⁽³⁾ or with some of the characters⁽⁴⁾, or even to disapproval of some of the situations⁽⁵⁾. It may also be that the drama did not appeal because of its diffuseness.

(1) *Realidad* (1892). *La Loca de la Casa* (1893).
La Fiera (1896).

(2) *La de San Quintín* (1894). *Doña Perfecta* (1896).

(3) We are shown humanity condemned to suffer for its misdeeds, and evil redeeming itself, when inspired by goodness.

(4) *Santamona* and *Paternoy*.

(5) (a) At end of Act I. when Paternoy decides that the two lovers must go away together, if they so desire.

(b) In Act II., Scene 16, when Paternoy and Santamona both lie, in order to save the apparently worthless life of José Leon.

Galdós did much to establish the beginnings of the contemporary Spanish drama and to decide how it was to develop. His theatre was one of reality, in which were represented the life and the problems of the inhabitants of Spain. Galdós was fundamentally a national dramatist, although a few of his themes may have been of wider interest. One of his most cherished aims was that his country should progress, and he inserted ideas of social reform into his dramas in order to try to attain his purpose. The main fault of his work lay in his technique, which was not altogether satisfactory. Nevertheless it cannot be denied that the dramatic contributions of Galdós were of importance, and that the twentieth century Spanish playwrights owe much to Don Benito.

We have now reached the conclusion of this period of dramatic production. The year 1898 marked a great change in the character of the nation. Disasters abroad made Spaniards realise that the fortunes of their country were at a low ebb, and that it was time they set their house in order. There was a general reappearance of

national spirit and pride, and Spain set out along the path of regeneration and progress.

Efforts have been made to bring twentieth century Spanish drama into line with the European theatre of the period. Authors and critics alike have turned from the violent, melodramatic works of Goytortu to the search for naturalism and restraint. Writers have looked abroad and found in Northern Europe a drama, inspired by Ibsen, the fruit of experiment in ideas, technique and style.

One cannot rightly contemporary Spanish playwrights together as forming one dramatic school and assign to them a common characteristic. Present day authors are rather individualistic, each exploring his own method and tending to react differently to foreign influences. Some have absorbed a certain amount of European dramatic theory and exemplify it in a more or less modified form in their works. These might be termed experimental dramatists. Others, the traditionalists, have retained more of the national elements in their production. An effort will be made to discuss one dramatic movement and attempt to show

CONCLUSION.

Efforts have been made to bring twentieth century Spanish drama into line with the European theatre of the period. Authors and public alike have turned from the violent, melodramatic works of Echegaray in search of naturalness and restraint. Writers have looked abroad and found in Northern Europe a drama, inspired by Ibsen, the fruit of experiment in ideas, technique and style.

One cannot classify contemporary Spanish playwrights together as forming one dramatic school with well defined characteristics. Present day authors are rather individualistic, each employing his own method and tending to react differently to foreign influences. Some have absorbed a certain amount of European dramatic theory and exemplify it in a more or less modified form in their works. These might be termed cosmopolitan dramatists. Others, the traditionalists, have retained more of the national elements in their productions. An effort will be made to discuss one dramatist, representative of each

class, and to estimate in his work the relative importance of the foreign influences and the national characteristics.

European dramatic theory is best exemplified in the plays of Benavente⁽¹⁾, a prolific, versatile author, and the most cosmopolitan dramatist that Spain has ever possessed. It may be stated at the outset that the works of Benavente exhibit the most varied characteristics and abound in apparent contradictions⁽²⁾. It is, therefore, difficult to make any definite pronouncement with regard to his dramatic theory, which must be discussed and analysed with caution.

The plays of Benavente are favourably regarded abroad. Many of them have been translated and some have been successfully presented. Within Spain, however, although

(1) Jacinto Benavente y Martínez (1866 -).

(2) On studying the earlier works of Benavente, for example Gente Conocida (1896) and La Gata de Angora (1900), one might be tempted to state that the author is a pure realist. This is contradicted by the Romantic tendencies which appear in La Noche del Sábado (1903), Princesa Bébé (1904) and other works, and by the symbolism of El Collar de Estrellas (1915) and Campo de Armiño (1916).

In the majority of Benavente's plays the question of sex does not appear to interest the author much. Yet he proceeds to produce La Malquerida (1913) where passion is the main theme, and later De Muy Buena Familia (1931) in which he deals with sexual perversion.

his works are highly valued, one cannot say that they are essentially popular productions. Unlike the majority of prominent Spanish dramatists of the past, Benavente makes appeal only to a cultured, intelligent public. His theatre depends too much upon ideas, subtle suggestion and epigrams which none but an educated audience would appreciate.

Benavente aims at reproducing life as he sees it. He sits apart, observes coolly and critically the scenes he wishes to describe and presents to us the result of his observation. His earlier plays were less profound, but, as years have passed, his penetration has increased, and he has deepened his comprehension of underlying currents. Benavente's method of presenting contemporary life and its problems is different from that of a number of his predecessors⁽¹⁾ in that it is based on the technique of the French naturalistic school and therefore intellectual, analytical and extremely realistic.

(1) For example, Ramón de la Cruz and Bretón de los Herreros.

Generally⁽¹⁾ the author's works are not didactic in the obtrusive manner of certain Spanish dramatists⁽²⁾ who favoured the play of contemporary customs. Benavente⁽³⁾ merely paints the picture sometimes ironically, always wittily and skilfully, and shows us the ill effects wrought by the evil he desires to bring to our notice. There is no preaching, no pushing of any social thesis into the foreground.

In comparison with the dramas of Echegaray, Benavente's plays are calm and restrained. There is generally little action in his works, and what does appear may not be worked out according to any set plan⁽⁴⁾. Its development, however, is always skilful, for Benavente possesses an excellent knowledge of the stage and everything connected with it. The characters, of whom there

(1) It is noticeable that some of Benavente's later works are more moralising in tone and almost resemble some of the thesis plays of Galdós, as for example Pepa Doncel (1928).

(2) Moratín, Tamayo y Baus, Ayala.

(3) Like Lonsdale and Somerset Maugham.

(4) A contrast to the 'pièce bien faite'.

are sometimes a large number, come and go, talk wittily to one another and reveal all that we need in the way of exposition. In the majority of cases there is no thrill, no striking dénouement; the piece moves along in a natural way. Desperate conflicts are absent and the direct clash between the forces of good and evil is no longer the central theme of the play. The audience cannot point to one person as the villain and another as the hero. The psychology is subtle and the characters are complex. Thus the appeal made to the emotions and sympathies of the public is much less direct. This aspect of Benavente's art is far removed indeed from the traditional Spanish drama. Throughout the centuries the Spaniard has loved colour, contrast, action and excitement in his theatre. No matter what else it might lack, these must be present. To a Spanish audience many of the author's works must appear almost lifeless with their lack of movement. They read well, but it must be difficult to present them on the stage in such a way as to win appreciation from a typical Spanish audience.

Benavente's plays are written in concise, flexible, expressive prose. His sentences are well balanced and

constructed. His dialogue attains an exceptionally high standard. As he introduces less action into his plays and does not give long and full stage directions, much depends upon the treatment of the dialogue. It flashes and sparkles in brisk, clear phrases. Particular satisfaction is given by the dialogue of one of his best works, Los Intereses Creados (1907), which conveys to the reader or individual member of the audience a variety of stimulating thoughts. Striving after rhetorical effect is not characteristic of Benavente's style, and only rarely in his plays do we find long speeches. Even those that do occur are short in comparison with the soliloquies, extending to two or three pages, that were so frequent in the 'Siglo de Oro comedias'. Benavente's literary style is not typically Spanish. It is that of a progressive dramatist, who has evolved a literary procedure of his own, differing considerably from that of his predecessors in the theatre of Spain.

It would appear, then, that Benavente represents the cosmopolitan aspect of the Spanish contemporary theatre. Yet we occasionally feel that there is another spirit present, which at times reveals his ancestry and shows

traces of the old Spanish stock. These are, principally, a powerful imagination, as shown in those of his works⁽¹⁾ in the Romantic style, and a certain passionate vigour which is revealed in passages of his plays⁽²⁾. The atmosphere of his theatre is Spanish, as are the characters presented. Even when the setting is abroad, the people act and talk as Spaniards. His productivity also is in the tradition of the Spanish theatre, although it cannot be said that his works derive much from improvisation.

The works of the brothers Quintero⁽³⁾ represent the popular, national side of contemporary Spanish drama. In one respect these writers have the same conception of dramatic production as Benavente in that the emphasis which used to be laid on the plot is transferred to the characters and to the description of ordinary life. Their plays become more pictorial than dramatic. Nevertheless, the Spanish public readily responds to the appeal

(1) E.g. *El Dragón de Fuego* (1904). *La Princesa Bébé* (1906).

(2) E.g. *La Noche del Sábado* (1903). *La Malquerida* (1913).

(3) (Serafín Álvarez Quintero (1871 -)
(Joaquín Álvarez Quintero (1873 -)

of this type of work when presented by the Quinteros.

The most successful works of the Quinteros are their short one act productions. These are of Spanish ancestry, descending from the 'sainetes',⁽¹⁾ of Ramón de la Cruz. There is no doubt that the brothers have a flair for this type of production, especially when it deals with their native Andalusia, describing some simple scene and everyday happening in a cafe, a street, or a park. What, for example, could be more amusing than the chance encounter of Doña Laura and Don Gonzalo as presented in Mañana de Sol (1905)? Their plays are natural and lifelike. We feel as if the incidents are really taking place and we are privileged to witness them. Their wit is of the true Spanish type, and mingled with it is a pathos or whimsicality which makes us realise that here, as ever, tragedy and comedy exist side by side. Their longer works are on the whole less successful. There is always the danger of their sentimentalism getting out of hand in three act plays, while

(1) The 'Sainetes' of Ramón de la Cruz dealt with the lower classes of Spain, while the Quinteros' one act pieces frequently deal with middle class society.

in the short pieces it is generally kept in check and their humour preserves a balance.

It is admitted that the productions of the Quinteros are not remarkable for penetrative power, nor profundity of thought. They are superficial and rarely symbolic. The authors seldom purpose to preach to their audience, and they are most successful when they conceal the moral. Everything in their work combines to give a feeling of optimism and happiness. When reading a play of the Quinteros, one feels that the sun shines more brightly, that there are fewer unpleasant people in existence than we thought, and that the world is not such a bad place after all.

The Quinteros, after creating the setting of their play, immediately proceed to introduce their characters. One can remember many of them vividly by small peculiarities, clearly defined, and the repetition of phrases they are in the habit of using. As the play proceeds, humorous situations are developed, and people move easily through the scenes to a very simple, natural conclusion. Nothing is presented to perplex or horrify, but we are

amused and cheered by what we have seen. The phraseology and expressions are in themselves very typical and often very interesting. It is perhaps unfortunate that the Andalusian dialect has been so much used in the Quinteros' productions, for on that account their works may not endure. The literary style is colloquial in parts, but at other times reaches almost poetical⁽¹⁾ heights. It is modern and generally free from unnecessary declamation, 'asides', and long monologues. The stage directions, as given by the authors, appear to be fuller than those of Benavente.

A foreigner⁽²⁾ may not fully appreciate these pictures of twentieth century Spain, but it is natural that the Spaniard should love these representations of his country, its people and customs. The works of the Quinteros preserve in them many of the characteristics and much of the spirit of the traditional Spanish drama,

(1) It is interesting to note that the Quinteros produced in 1930 a play in verse, Madreselva, which was well received by the public but not by the critics.

(2) At the same time it may be remembered that many of the authors' works have been translated into English and that several of these have been successfully presented on the English stage.

its native wit and realism, even although their technique and style partly belong to the twentieth century.

In 1898 Spanish dramatists closed a door on their traditional theatre, but there still filters through the light of the national drama even in this twentieth century. Although the evolution of the theatre continues, the characteristics of Spanish dramatic genius are too deeply rooted to disappear completely. Modified by the passing of years they lose strength as foreign influences grow; yet, they can still be recognised as representative of Spain which created its own national 'comedia'.

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